

US009229244B2

(12) **United States Patent**
Nakayama et al.

(10) **Patent No.:** **US 9,229,244 B2**
(45) **Date of Patent:** **Jan. 5, 2016**

(54) **IMAGE-BLUR CORRECTION DEVICE, IMAGE-BLUR CORRECTION METHOD, AND IMAGE CAPTURE APPARATUS**

(58) **Field of Classification Search**
CPC H04N 5/23248; H04N 5/23264; H04N 5/23287; H04N 5/23241; H04N 5/23258
See application file for complete search history.

(71) Applicant: **Sony Corporation**, Tokyo (JP)

(56) **References Cited**

(72) Inventors: **Tatsuyuki Nakayama**, Kanagawa (JP);
Kousuke Tsuchihashi, Kanagawa (JP);
Masahide Yamasaki, Kanagawa (JP)

U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS

(73) Assignee: **SONY CORPORATION**, Tokyo (JP)

5,978,600 A * 11/1999 Takeuchi et al. 396/53
6,944,397 B2 * 9/2005 Miwa 396/106
7,592,759 B2 * 9/2009 Shibatani 318/119
2006/0108964 A1 * 5/2006 Shibatani 318/685

(*) Notice: Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this patent is extended or adjusted under 35 U.S.C. 154(b) by 34 days.

FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS

(21) Appl. No.: **14/132,555**

JP 09-080541 3/1997

(22) Filed: **Dec. 18, 2013**

* cited by examiner

(65) **Prior Publication Data**

US 2014/0176742 A1 Jun. 26, 2014

Primary Examiner — Ahmed A Berhan

(30) **Foreign Application Priority Data**

Dec. 26, 2012 (JP) 2012-282503

(74) *Attorney, Agent, or Firm* — Hazuki International, LLC

(51) **Int. Cl.**

H04N 5/232 (2006.01)
H04N 5/77 (2006.01)
H04N 9/804 (2006.01)
G02B 27/64 (2006.01)

(57) **ABSTRACT**

An image-blur correction device includes a drive-current output unit that outputs a first drive current for driving a first correction mechanism for correcting image blur in a first direction orthogonal to an optical axis and a second drive current for driving a second correction mechanism for correcting image blur in a second direction orthogonal to the optical axis and the first direction; and a drive-current limiting unit that limits the first drive current to a first limit value, limits the second drive current to a second limit value, limits a total value of the first and second drive currents to a third limit value smaller than a total value of the first and second limit values, varies the first limit value by changing a power-supply time of the first drive current, and varies the second limit value by changing a power-supply time of the second drive current.

(52) **U.S. Cl.**

CPC **G02B 27/646** (2013.01); **H04N 5/23241** (2013.01); **H04N 5/23258** (2013.01); **H04N 5/23287** (2013.01); **H04N 5/772** (2013.01); **H04N 9/8042** (2013.01)

14 Claims, 15 Drawing Sheets

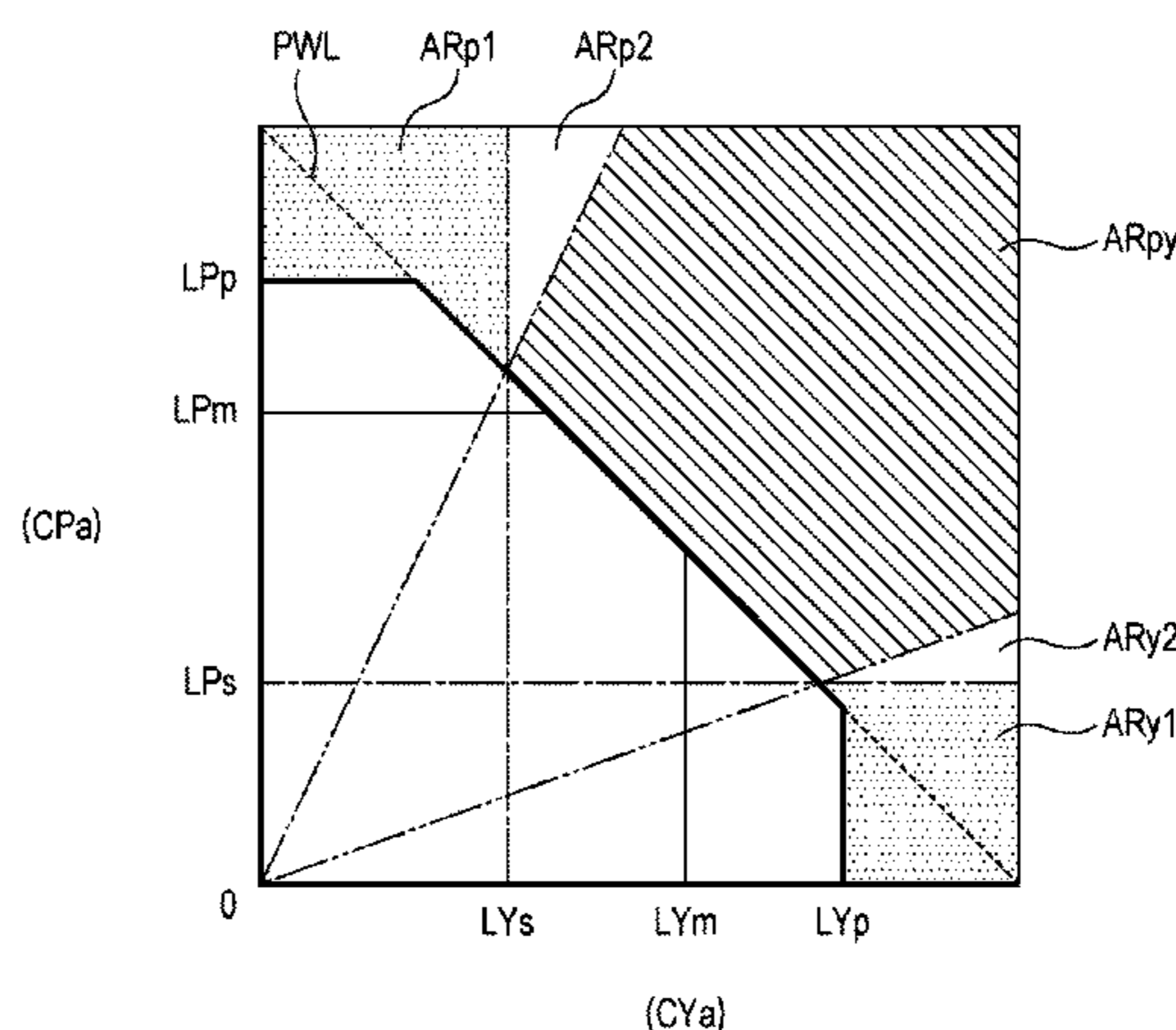
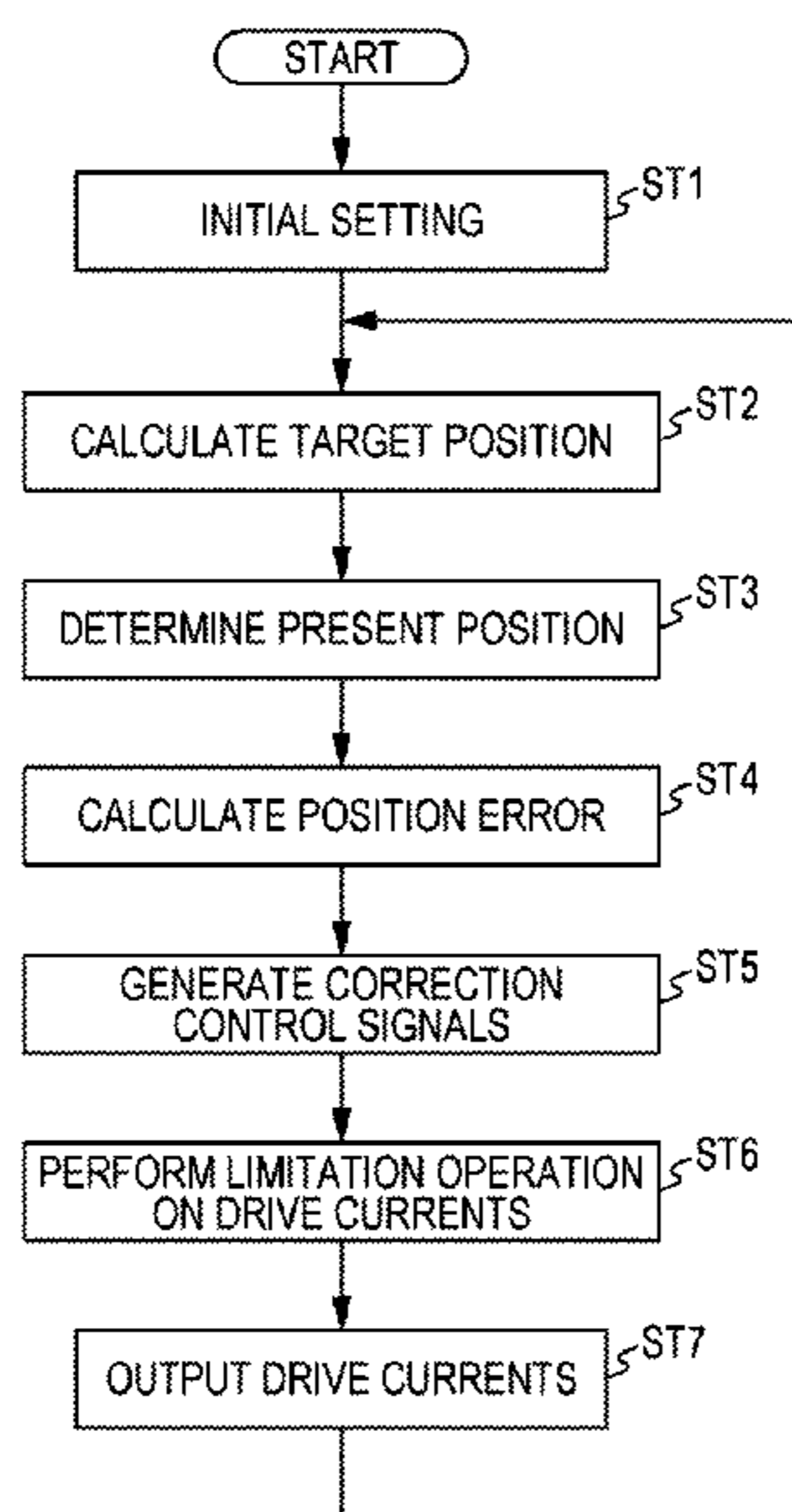


FIG. 1

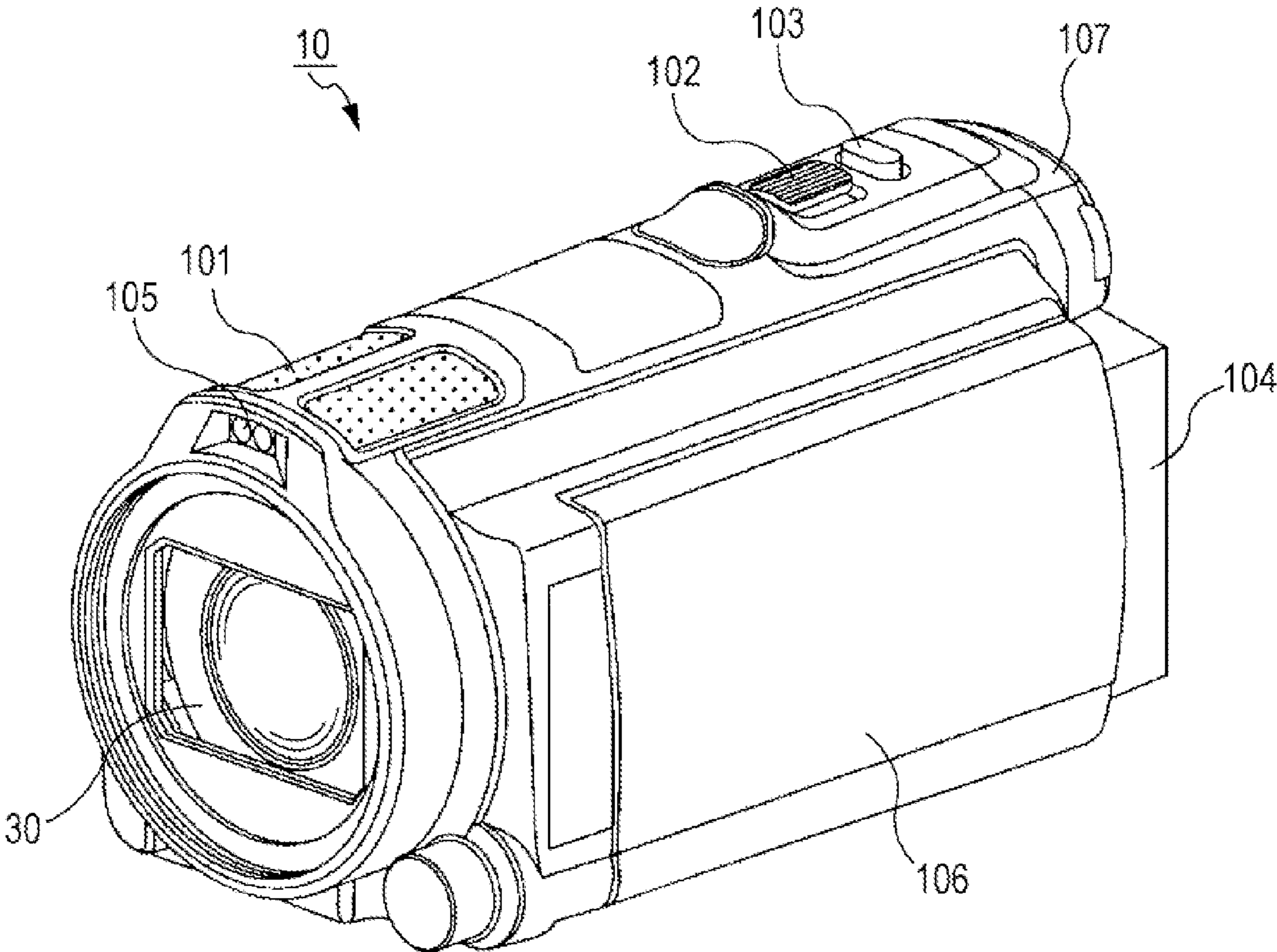
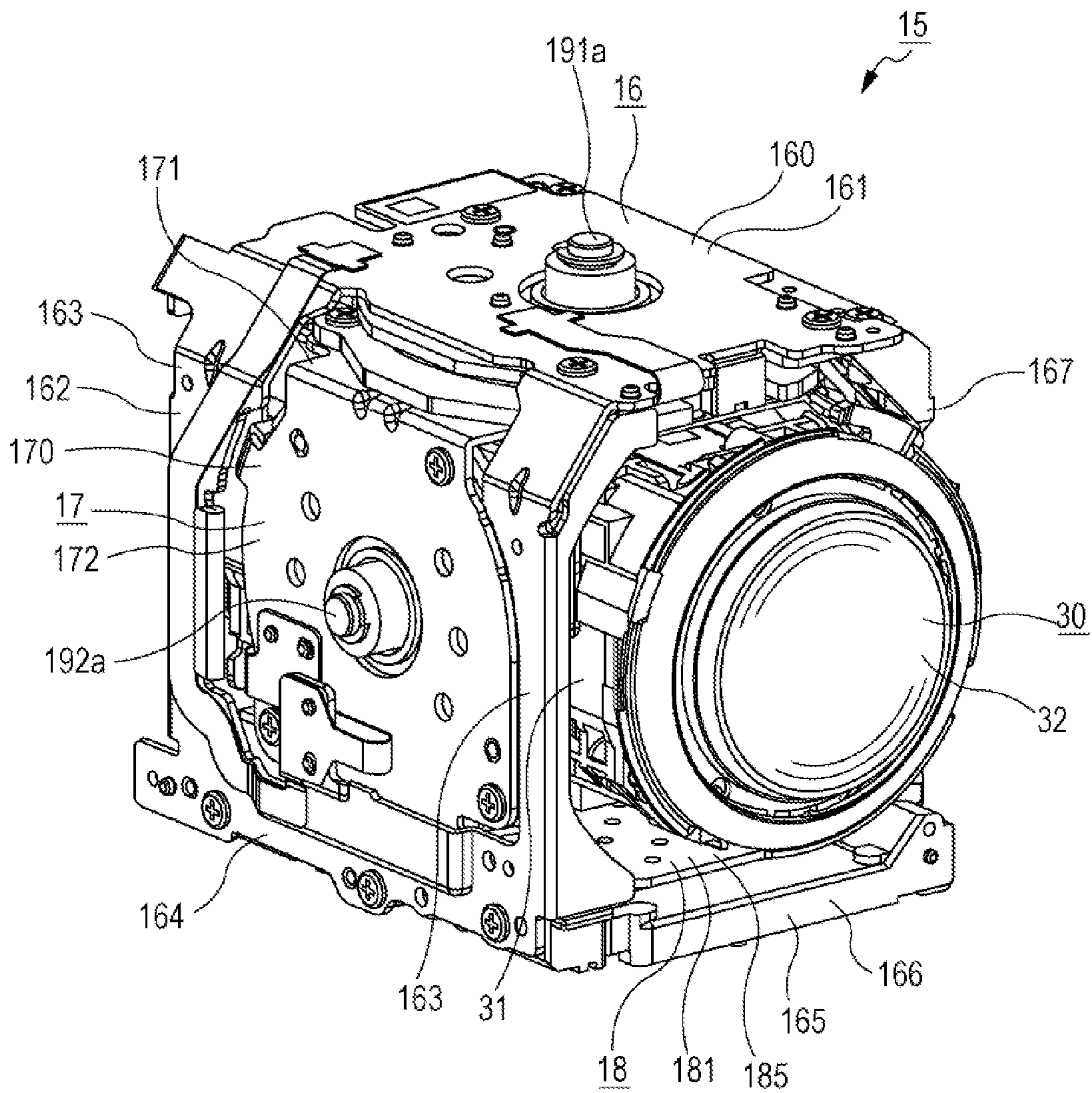


FIG. 2



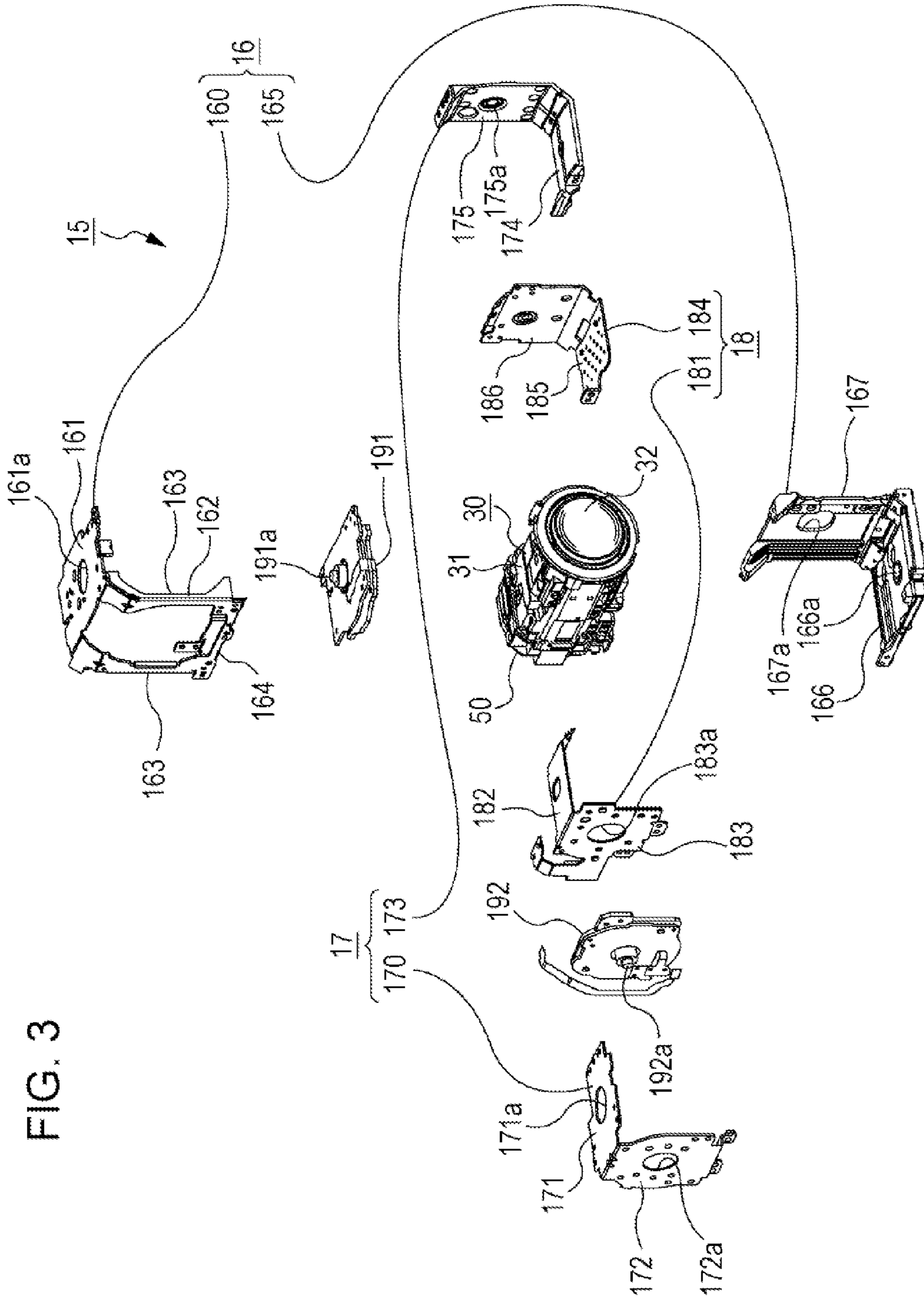


FIG. 3

FIG. 4

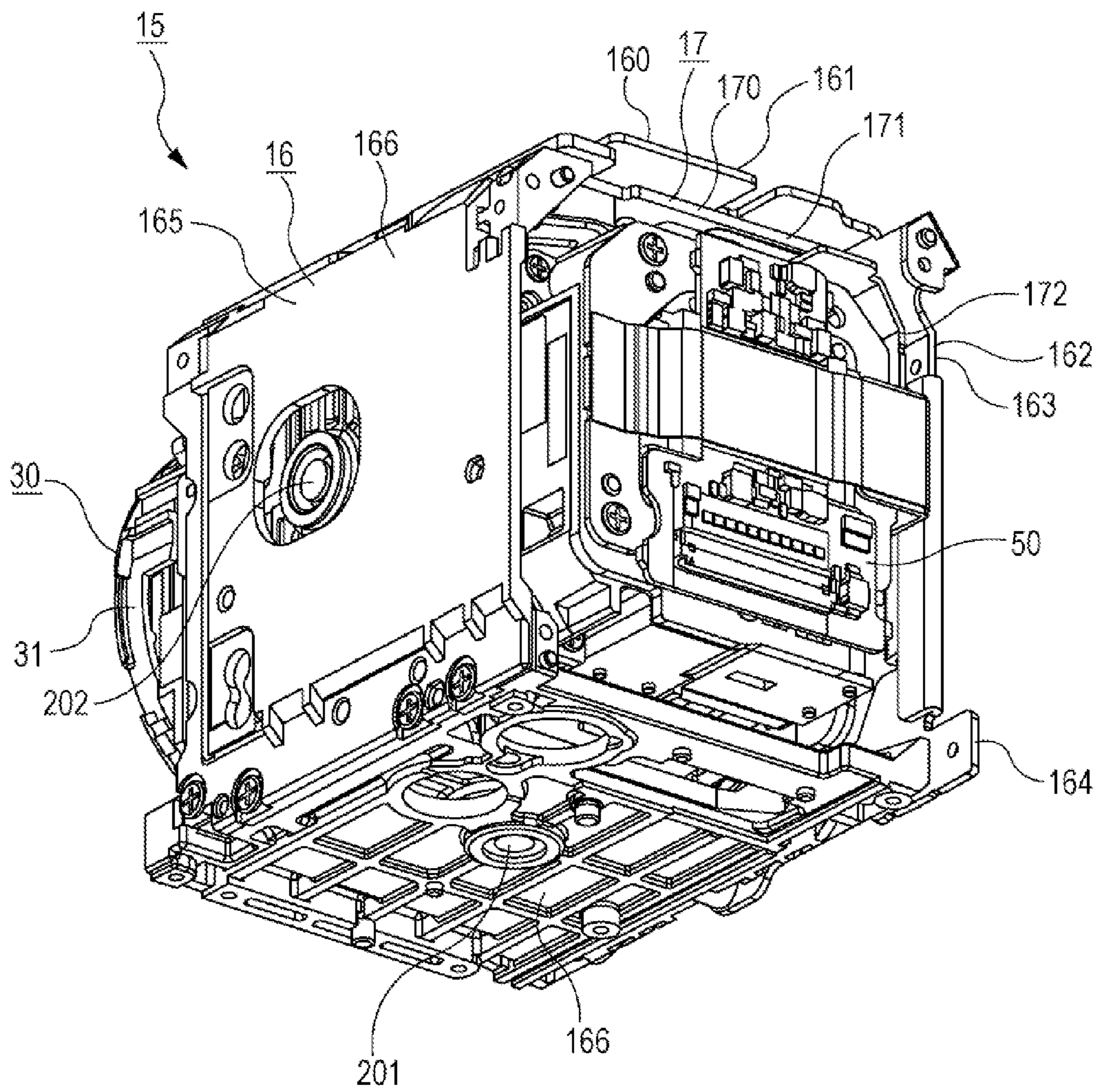


FIG. 5

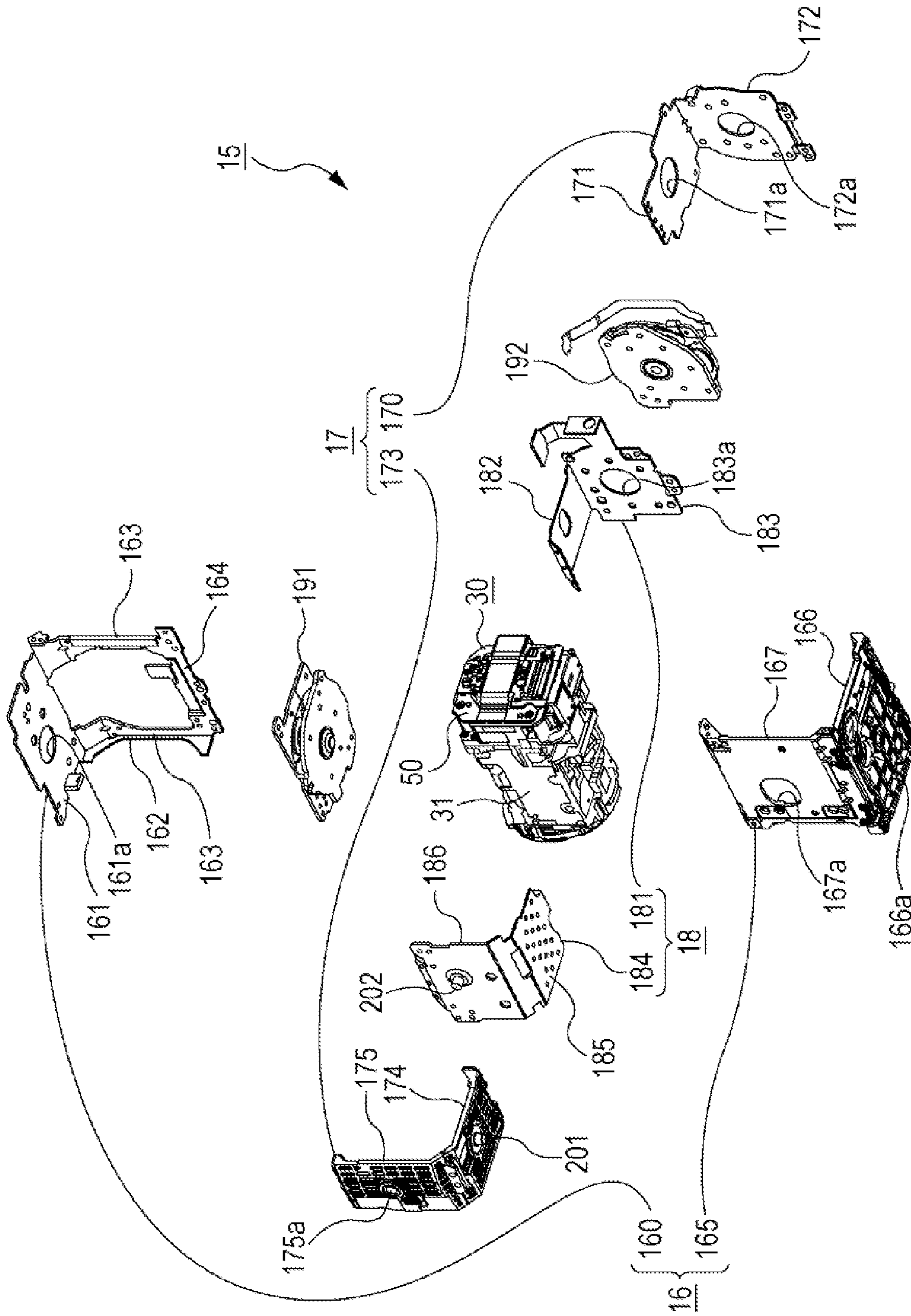


FIG. 6

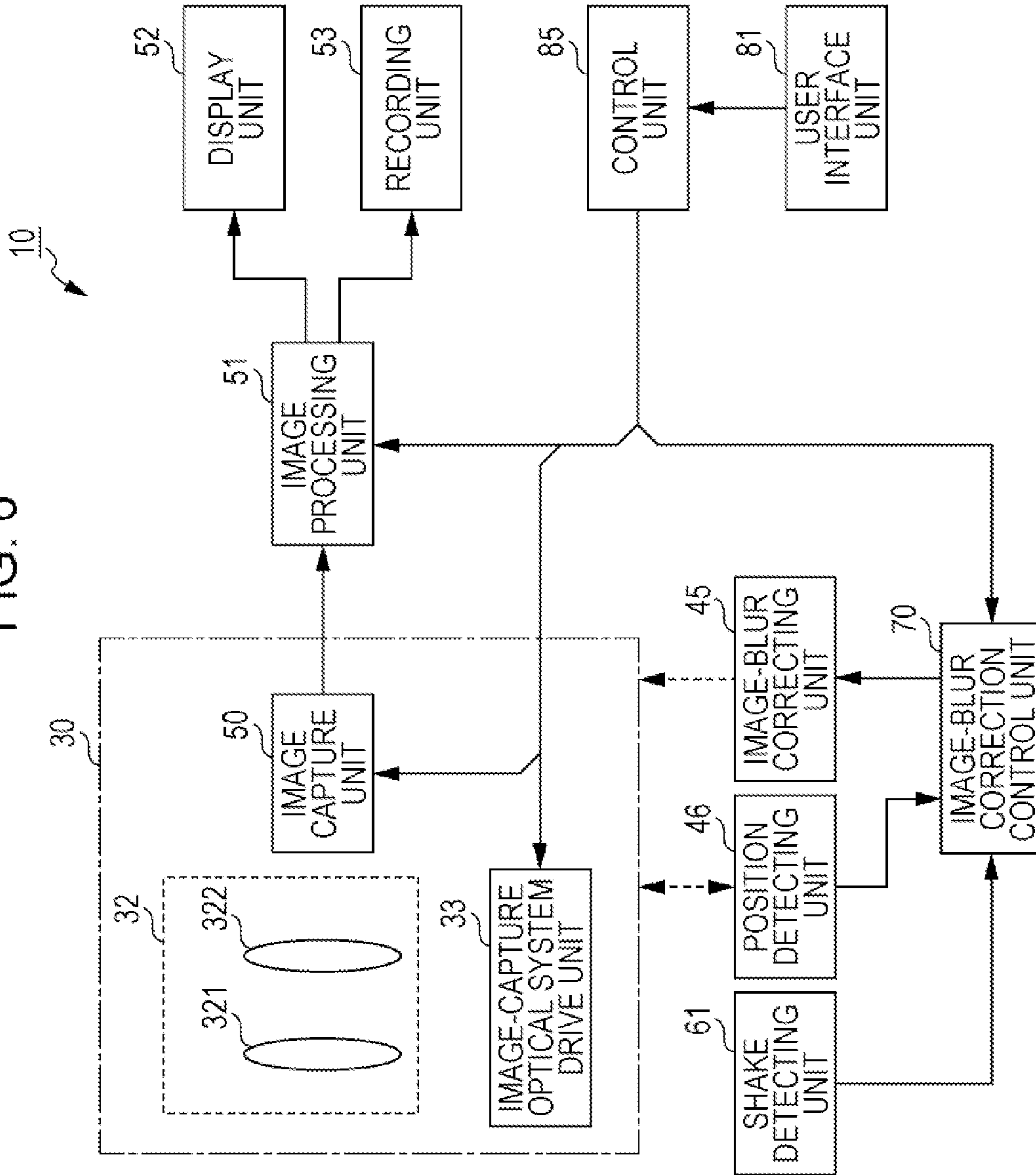


FIG. 7

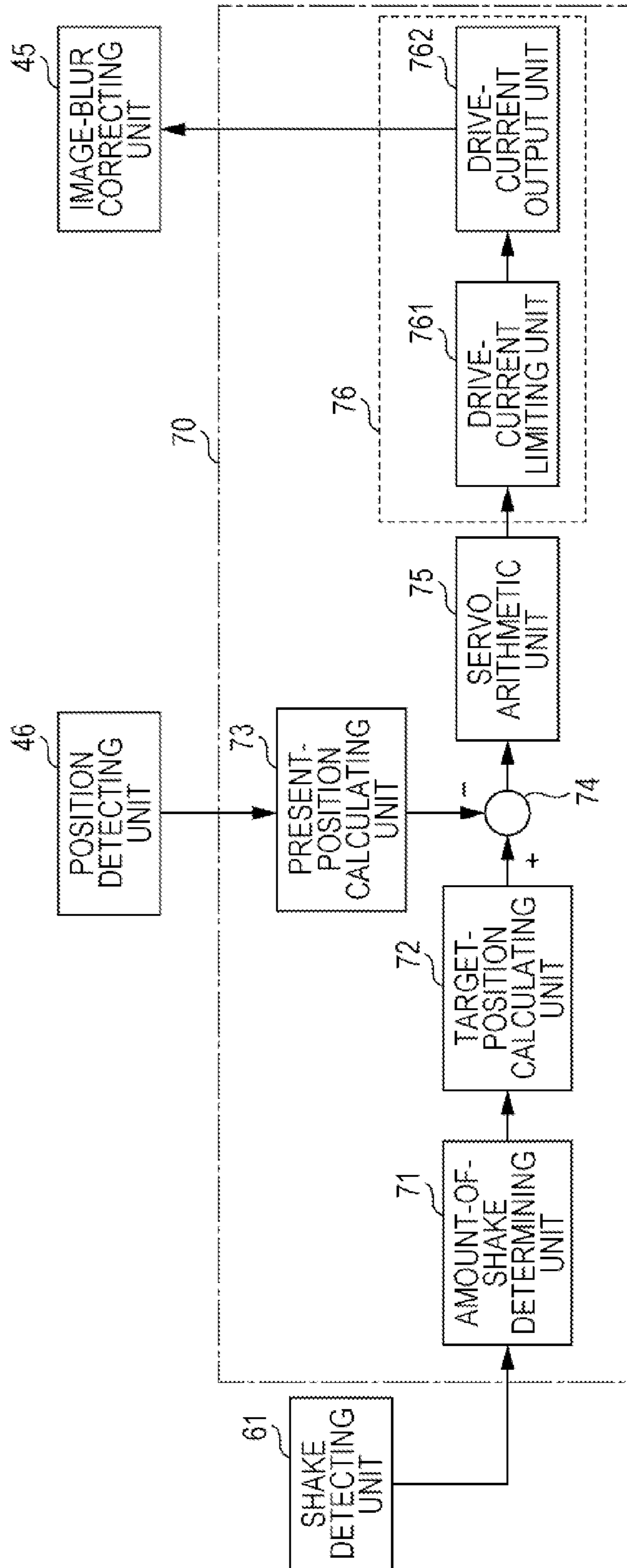


FIG. 8

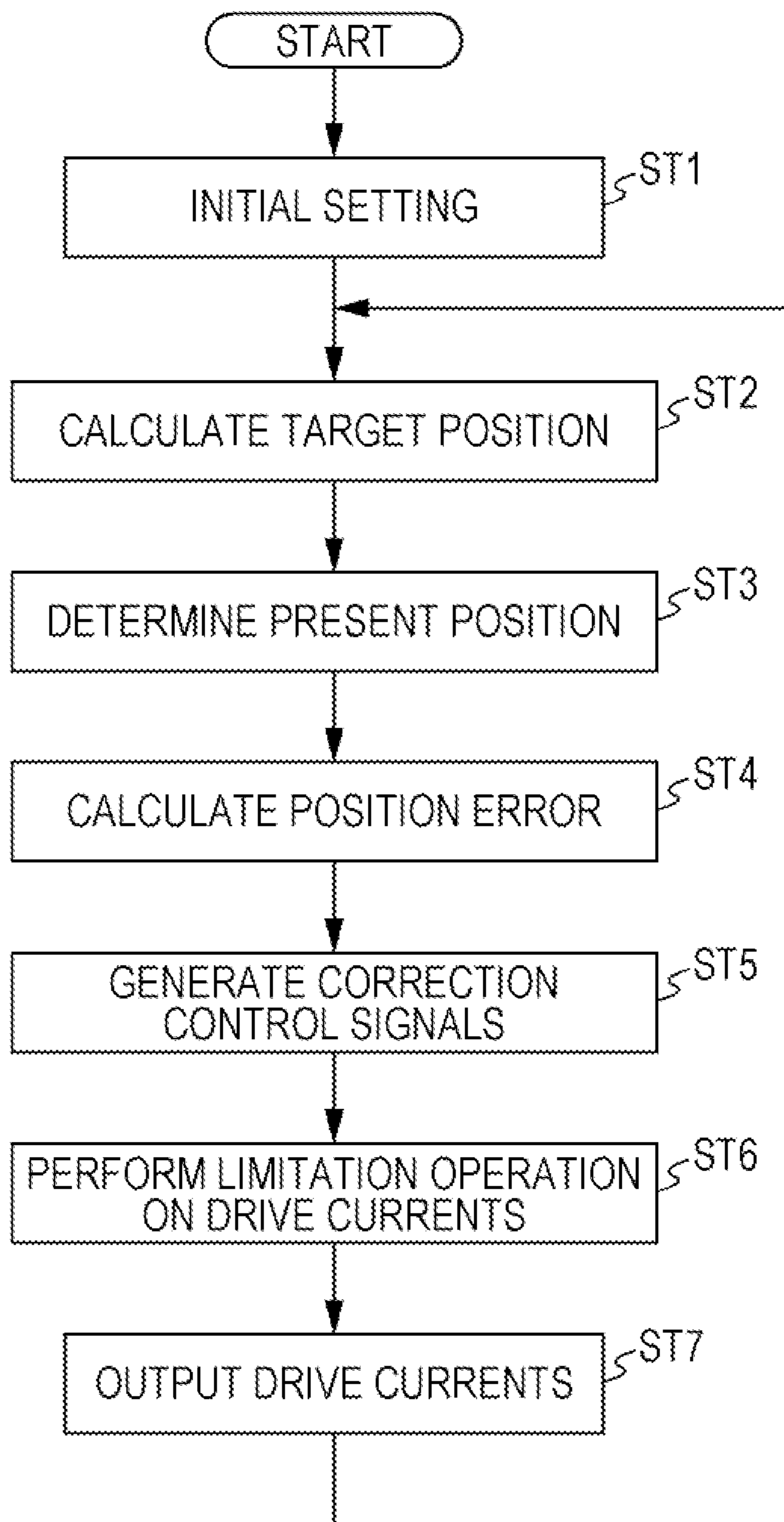


FIG. 9

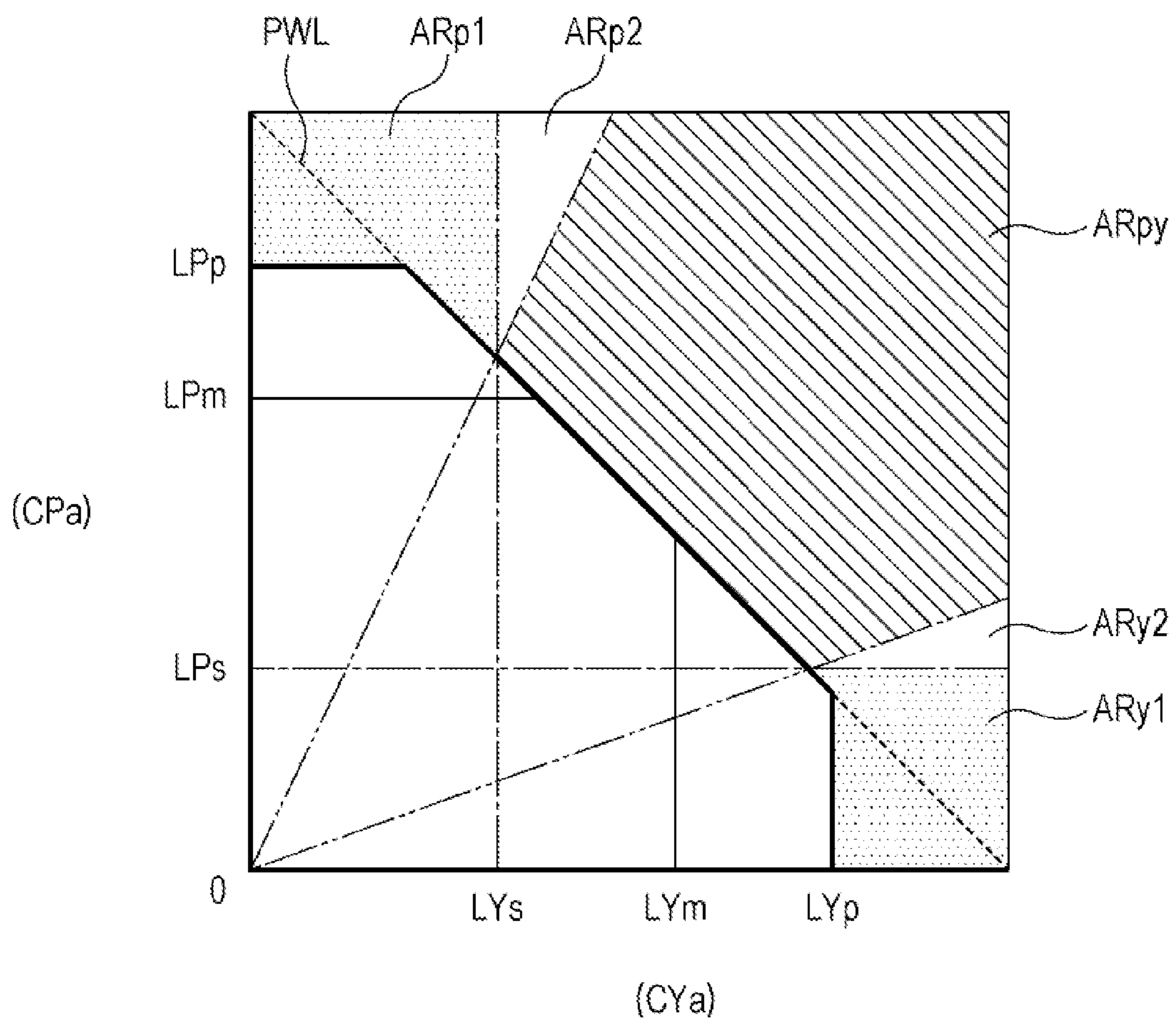


FIG. 10

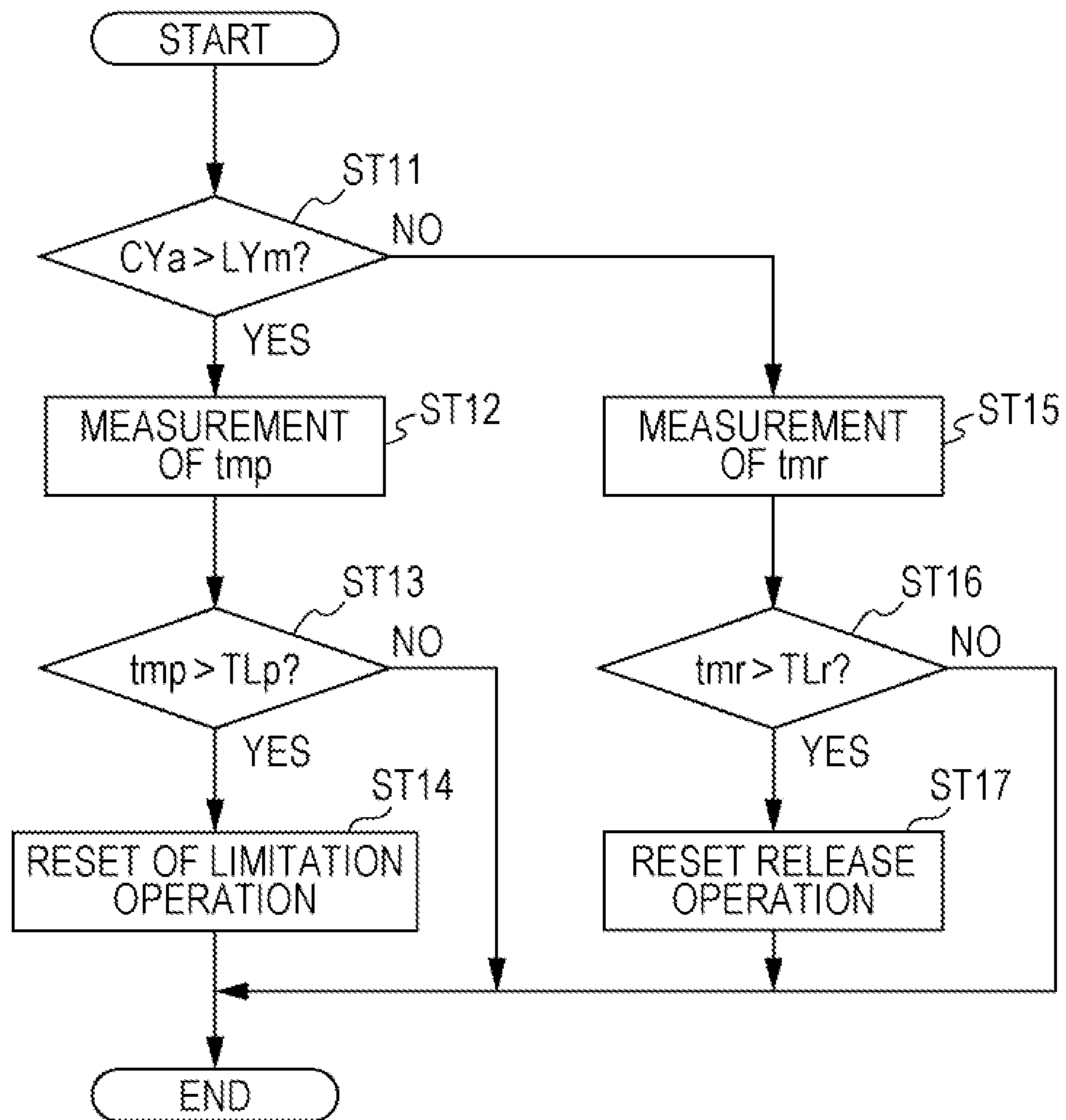


FIG. 11

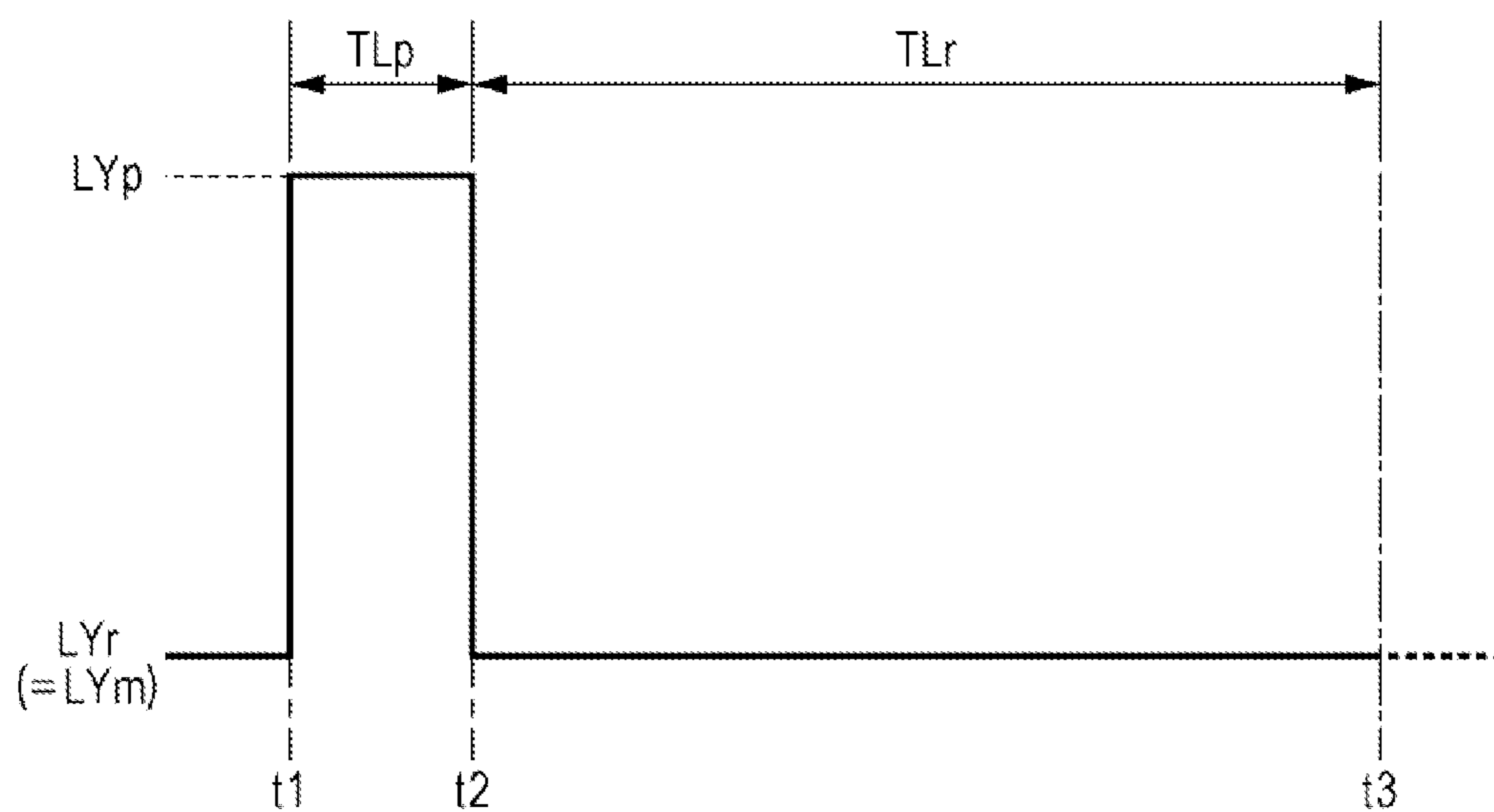


FIG. 12

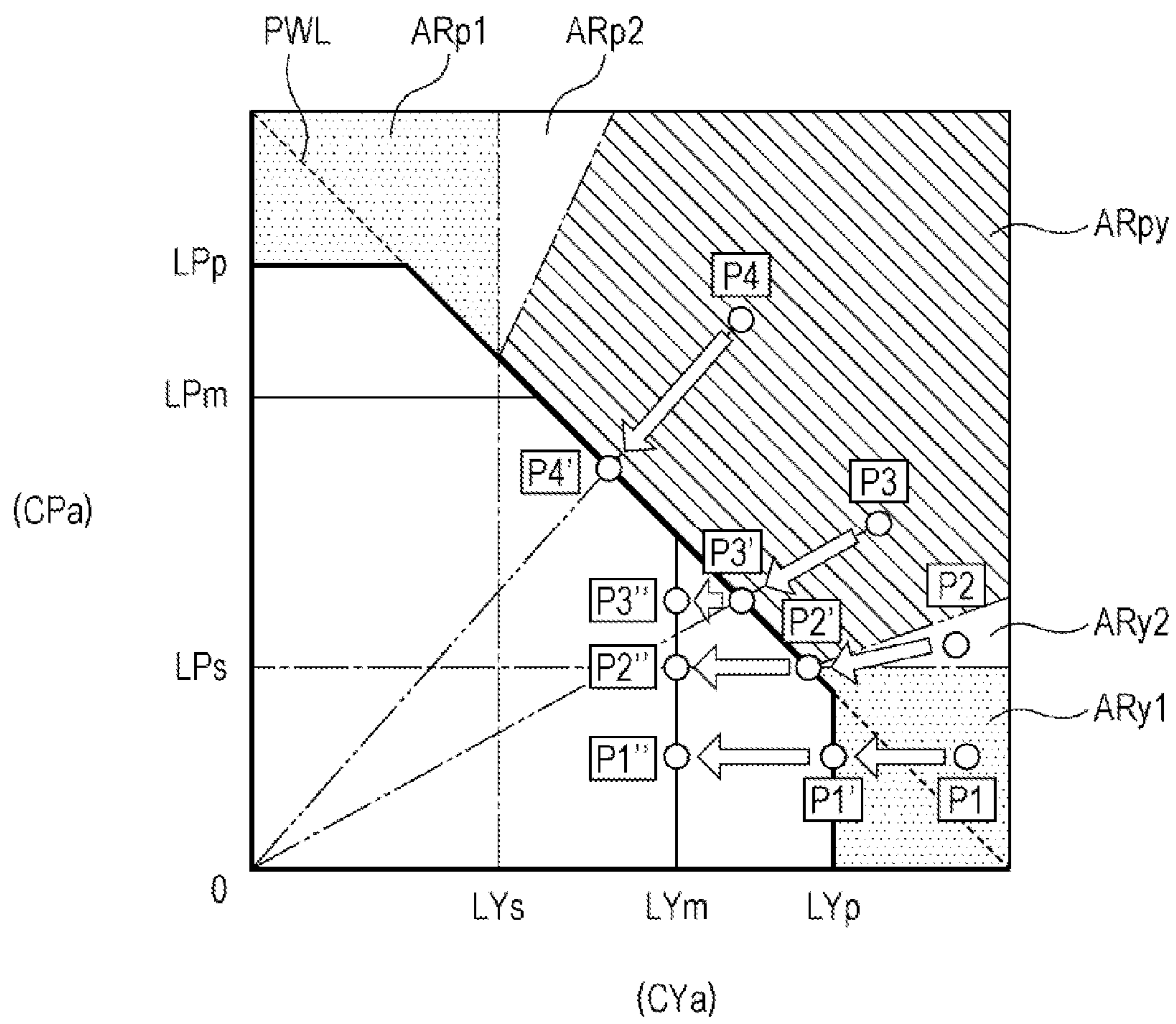


FIG. 13

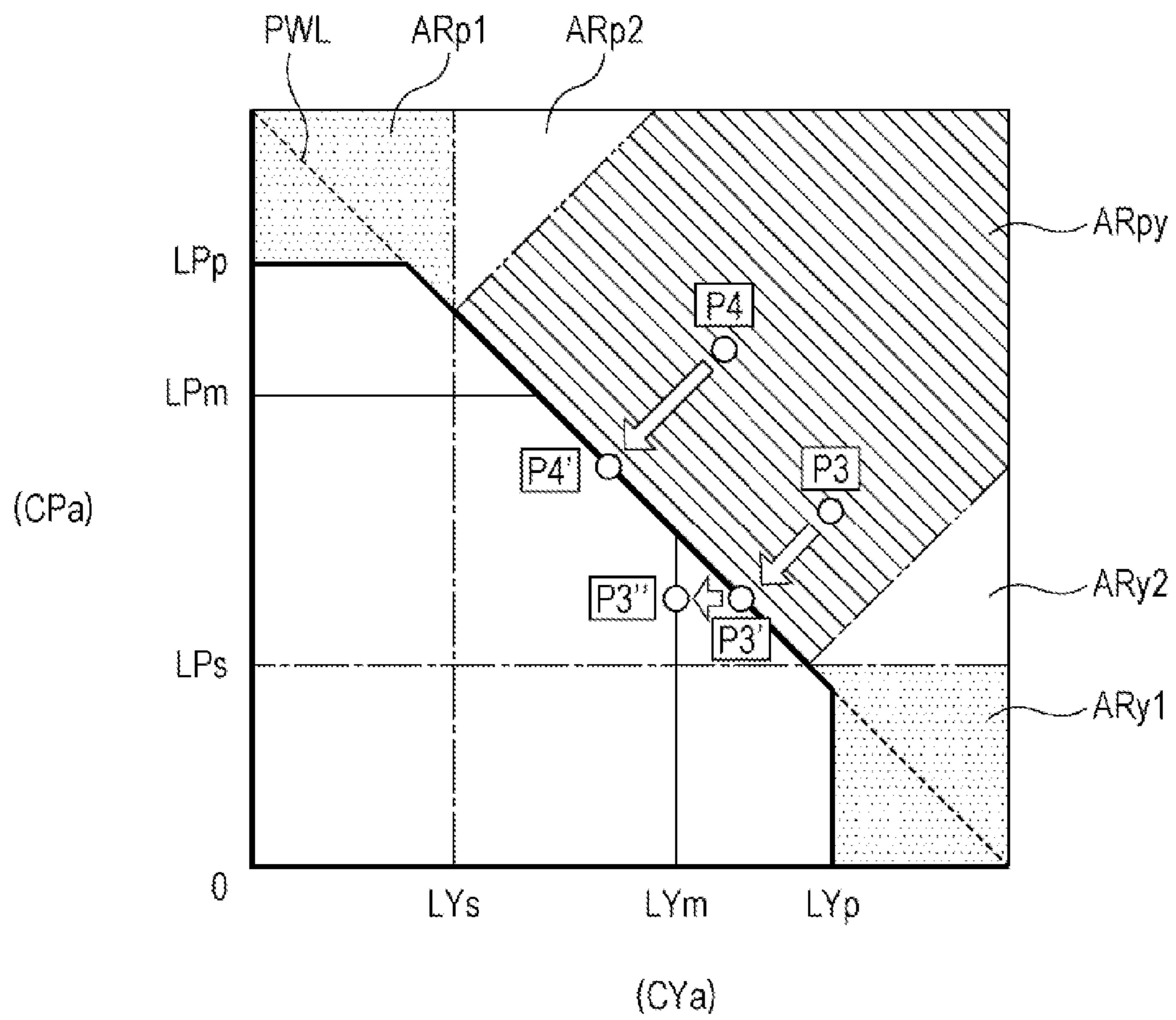


FIG. 14

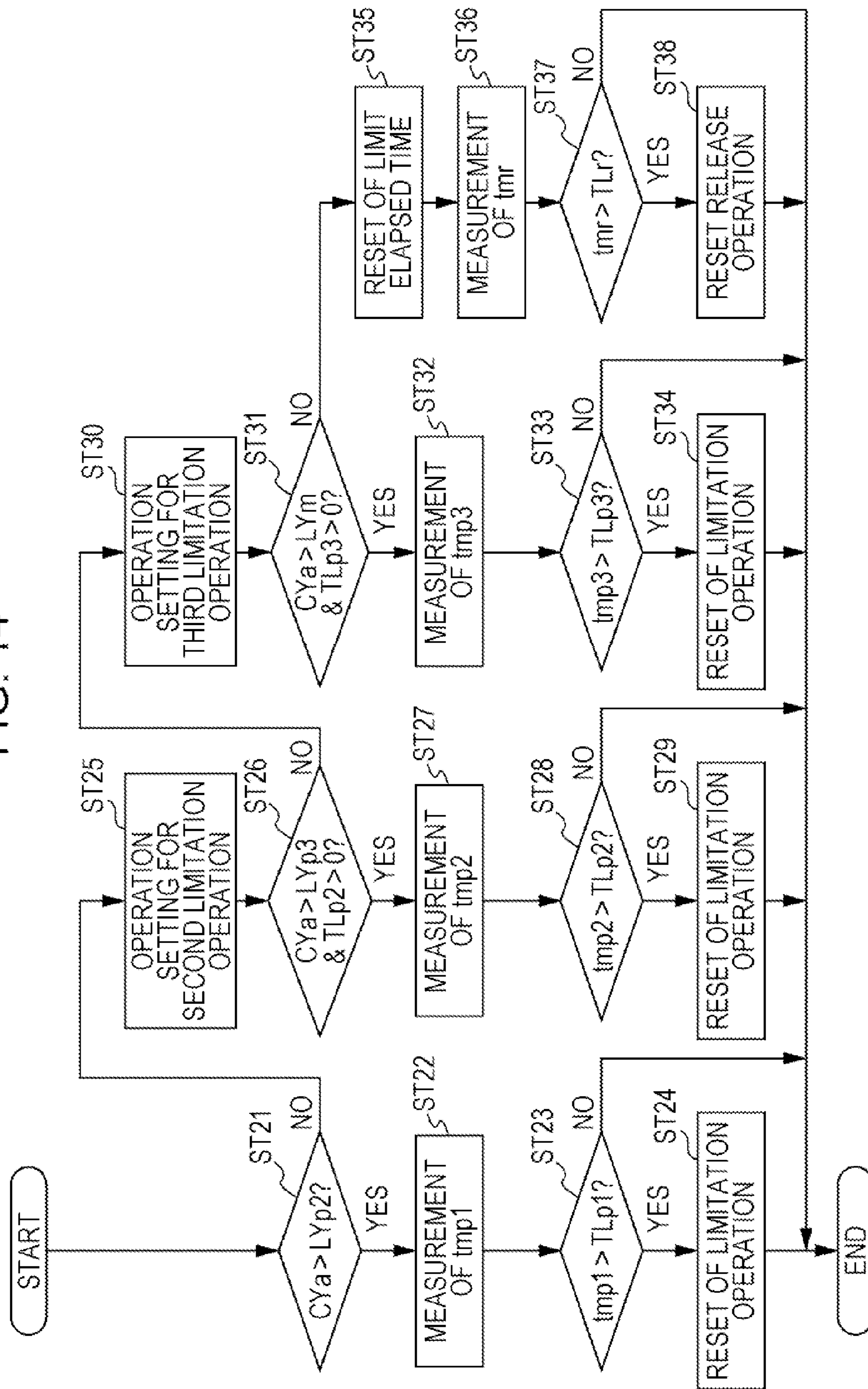


FIG. 15A

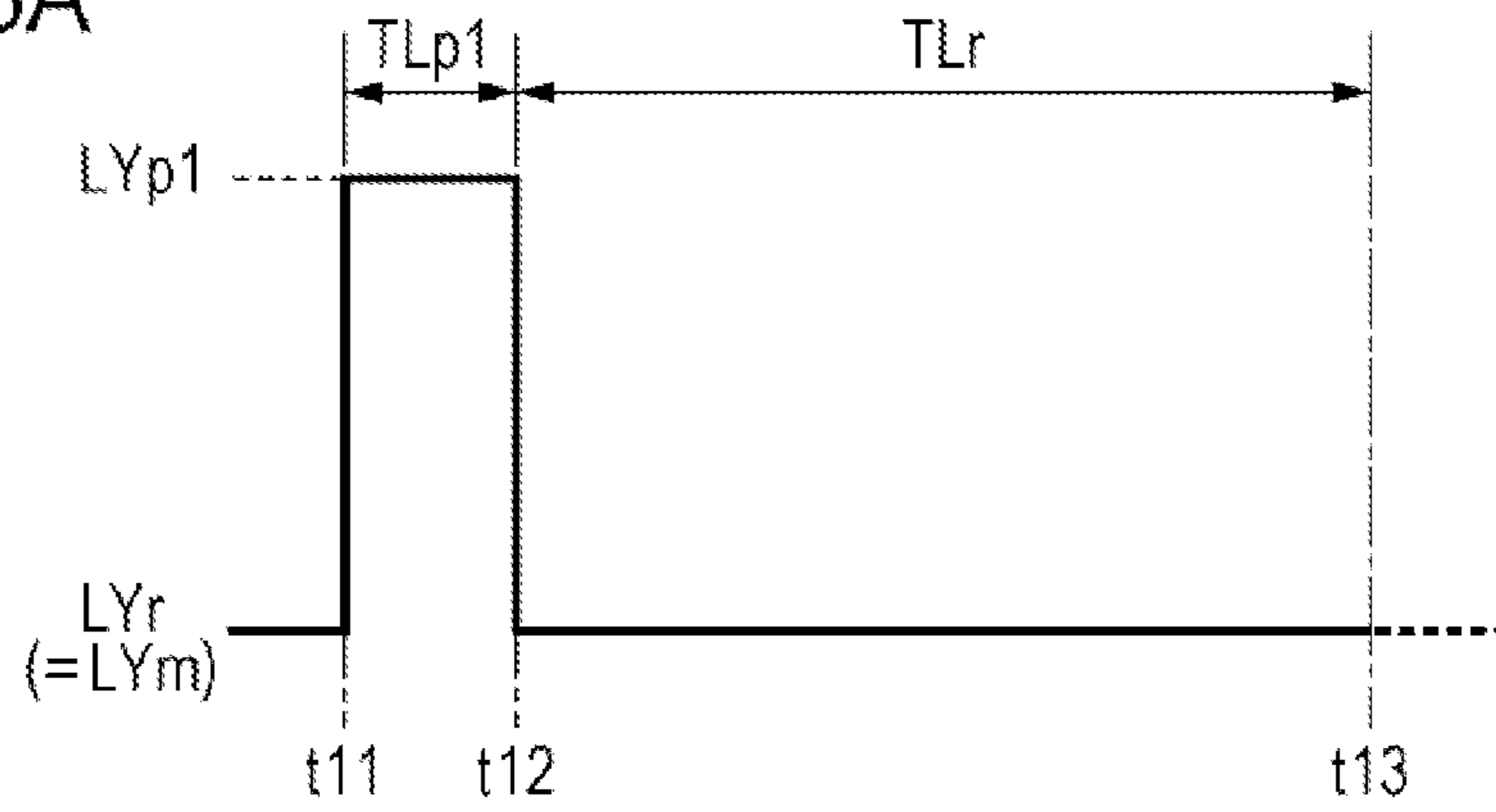


FIG. 15B

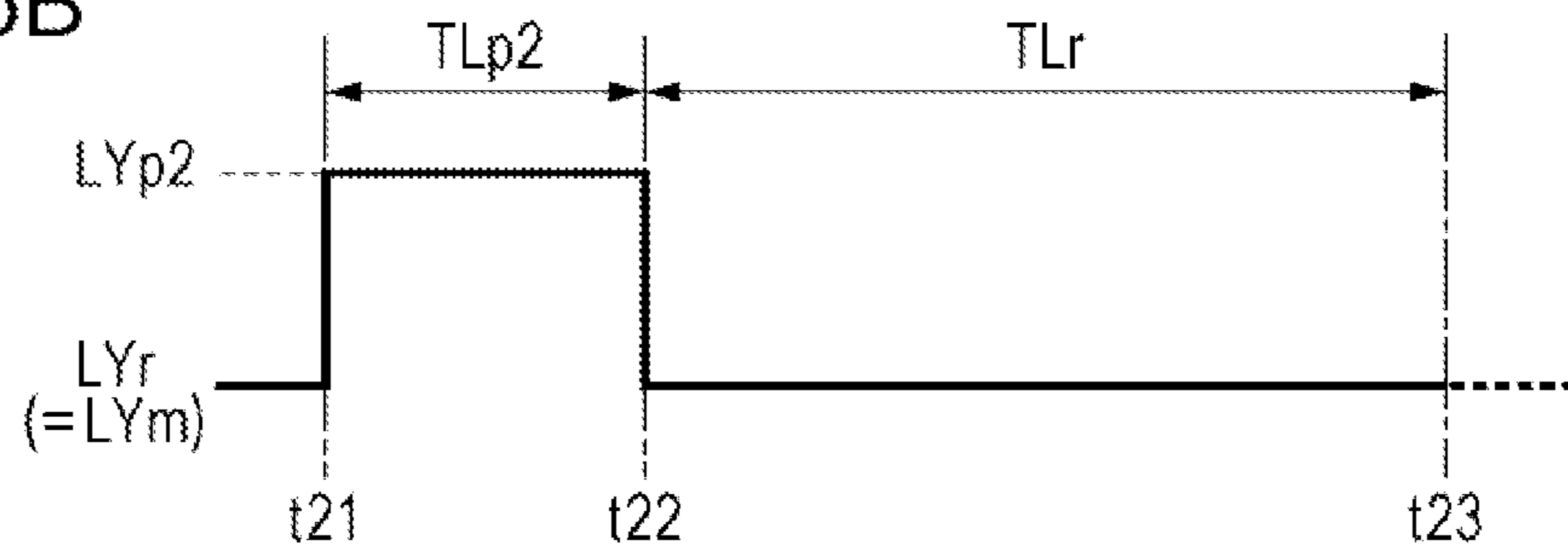
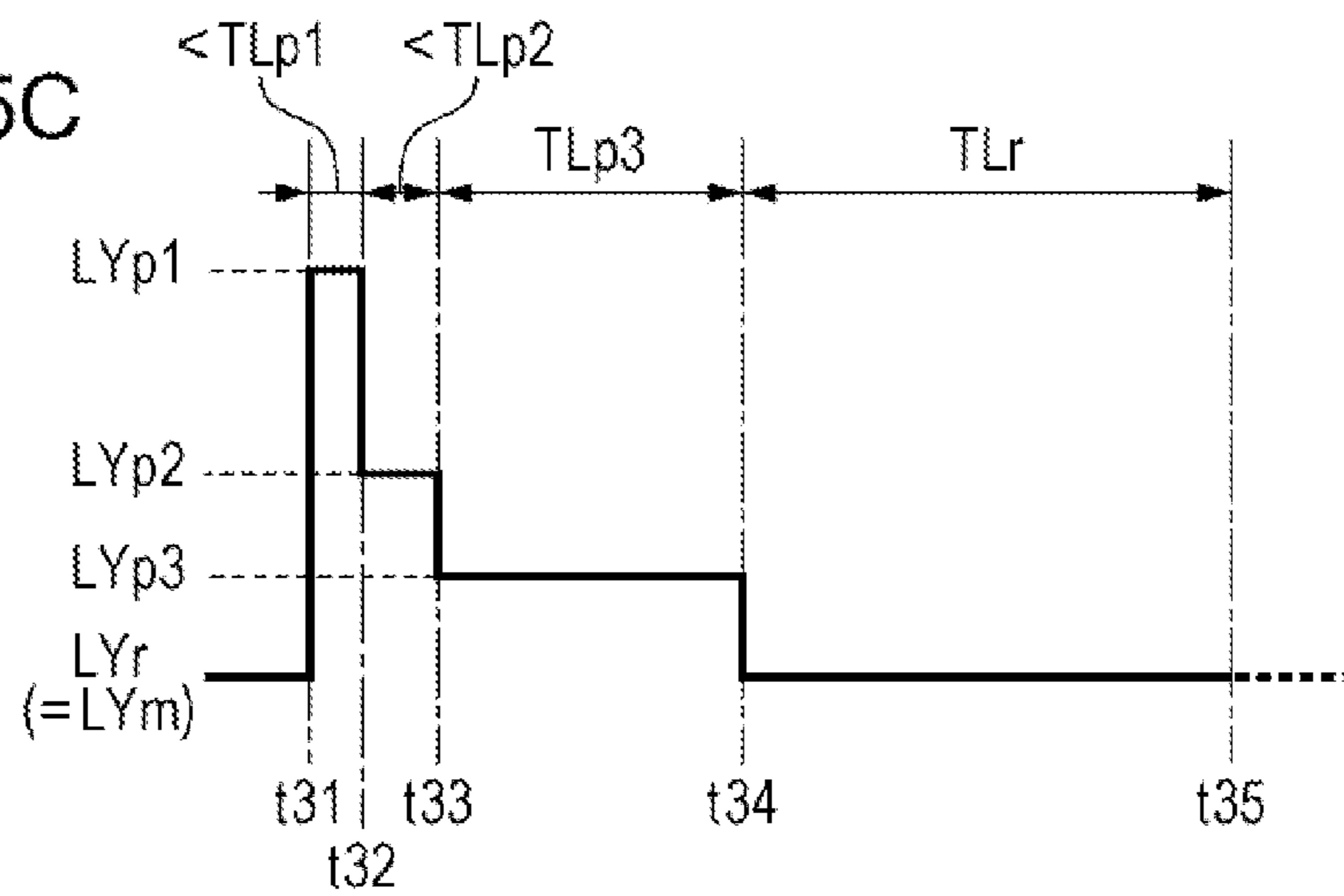


FIG. 15C



1

**IMAGE-BLUR CORRECTION DEVICE,
IMAGE-BLUR CORRECTION METHOD, AND
IMAGE CAPTURE APPARATUS**

CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED
APPLICATIONS

This application claims the benefit of Japanese Priority Patent Application JP 2012-282503 filed Dec. 26, 2012, the entire contents of which are incorporated herein by reference.

BACKGROUND

The present technology relates to an image-blur correction device, an image-blur correction method, and an image capture apparatus that allow image-blur correction to be performed in a favorable manner.

Some image capture apparatuses, such as video cameras and still cameras, are provided with an image-blur correction device for performing image-blur correction by moving a lens in a direction orthogonal to an optical-axis direction. In image capture apparatuses provided with such an image-blur correction device, a total value of powers supplied from two or more drive mechanisms that perform image-blur correction is limited, for example, in the manner disclosed in Japanese Unexamined Patent Application Publication No. 9-80541.

SUMMARY

When the drive mechanisms use high torque for the image-blur correction, a large amount of current is supplied to the drive mechanisms. However, maximum rated currents are pre-specified for drivers for supplying drive currents to the drive mechanisms and a power-supply unit for supplying power to the drivers. For example, the maximum rated output currents of the driver for supplying drive current to the drive mechanism for correcting image blur in the vertical direction and the driver for supplying drive current to the drive mechanism for correcting image blur in the horizontal direction are assumed to be set to 1.0 ampere. The maximum rated output current of the power-supply unit for supplying power to the drivers is assumed to be set to 1.2 amperes. In this case, when the currents output from the drivers are set to be the same so as not to exceed the maximum rated output current of the power-supply unit, it is desired that the current output from each driver be reduced to 0.6 ampere. It is, therefore, difficult to increase the currents output from the drivers to generate high torque.

Accordingly, it is desirable to provide an image-blur correction device, an image-blur correction method, and an image capture apparatus that allow image-blur correction to be performed in a favorable manner.

According to a first embodiment of the present technology, there is provided an image-blur correction device. The image-blur correction device includes: a drive-current output unit configured to output a first drive current for driving a first correction mechanism for correcting image blur in a first direction orthogonal to an optical axis and a second drive current for driving a second correction mechanism for correcting image blur in a second direction orthogonal to the optical axis and the first direction; and a drive-current limiting unit configured to limit the first drive current to a first limit value, limit the second drive current to a second limit value, limit a total value of the first drive current and the second drive current to a third limit value that is smaller than a total value of the first limit value and the second limit value, vary the first limit value by changing a power-supply time of the first drive

2

current, and vary the second limit value by changing a power-supply time of the second drive current.

In the first embodiment of the present technology, with respect to a first drive current for driving a first correction mechanism for correcting image blur in a first direction orthogonal to an optical axis and a second drive current for driving a second correction mechanism for correcting image blur in a second direction orthogonal to the optical axis and the first direction, the first drive current is limited to a first limit value, the second drive current is limited to a second limit value, a total value of the first drive current and the second drive current is limited to a third limit value that is smaller than a total value of the first limit value and the second limit value. The first limit value is varied by changing a power-supply time of the first drive current, and the second limit value is varied by changing a power-supply time of the second drive current. For example, a power-supply time in which the first drive current is limited to the first limit value may be reduced to thereby increase the first limit value, and a power-supply time in which the second drive current is limited to the second limit value may be reduced to thereby increase the second limit value. The third limit value may be set in accordance with a power supply capability of a power-supply unit that supplies power used for generating the first drive current and the second drive current. The first limit value may be varied in accordance with an amount of current of the first drive current used for correcting the image blur in the first direction, and the second limit value may be varied in accordance with an amount of current of the second drive current used for correcting the image blur in the second direction. Limit values for ensuring minimum drive currents may be set for the first limit value and the second limit value. During limitation of the first drive current and the second drive current, the limitation of one of the first and second drive currents and the limitation of the other drive current may be performed in association with each other. For example, an amount of limitation of the one drive current may be set to an amount of limitation corresponding to an amount of limitation of the other drive current. In addition, correction control signals generated so as to correct the image blur may be limited in accordance with a detection result of the image blur, and the correction control signals may be corrected so that the first drive signal supplied from the drive-current output unit to the first correction mechanism and the second drive signal supplied from the drive-current output unit to the second correction mechanism, the first drive signal and the second drive signal being supplied based on the correction control signals having limit values, have constant current values corresponding to the limit values. In the image-blur correction, limitation is performed on drive currents including a third drive current for driving a third correction mechanism for correcting image blur in a rotation direction about the optical axis.

According to a second embodiment of the present technology, there is provided an image-blur correction method. The image-blur correction method includes: outputting a first drive current for driving a first correction mechanism for correcting image blur in a first direction orthogonal to an optical axis and a second drive current for driving a second correction mechanism for correcting image blur in a second direction orthogonal to the optical axis and the first direction; and limiting the first drive current to a first limit value, limiting the second drive current to a second limit value, limiting a total value of the first drive current and the second drive current to a third limit value that is smaller than a total value of the first limit value and the second limit value, varying the first limit value by changing a power-supply time of the first

drive current, and varying the second limit value by changing a power-supply time of the second drive current.

According to a third embodiment of the present technology, there is provided an image capture apparatus. The image capture apparatus includes: an image capture unit configured to generate an image signal of a captured image; a shake detecting unit configured to detect shake of the image capture apparatus; a first correction mechanism configured to correct, in the captured image, image blur in a first direction orthogonal to an optical axis; a second correction mechanism configured to correct, in the captured image, image blur in a second direction orthogonal to the optical axis and the first direction; a drive-current output unit configured to output a first drive current for driving the first correction mechanism and a second drive current for driving the second correction mechanism; and a drive-current limiting unit configured to limit the first drive current to a first limit value, limit the second drive current to a second limit value, and limit a total value of the first drive current and the second drive current to a third limit value that is smaller than a total value of the first limit value and the second limit value, in accordance with a detection result of the image blur, and to vary the first limit value by changing a power-supply time of the first drive current and vary the second limit value by changing a power-supply time of the second drive current.

According to the present technology, with respect to a first drive current for driving a first correction mechanism for correcting image blur in a first direction orthogonal to an optical axis and a second drive current for driving a second correction mechanism for correcting image blur in a second direction orthogonal to the optical axis and the first direction, the first drive current is limited to a first limit value, the second drive current is limited to a second limit value, a total value of the first drive current and the second drive current is limited to a third limit value that is smaller than a total value of the first limit value and the second limit value. In addition, the first limit value is varied by changing the power-supply time of the first drive current. The second limit value is also varied by changing the power-supply time of the second drive current. Accordingly, increasing the limit values by changing the power-supply times makes it possible to supply large drive currents to the correction mechanisms and to perform image-blur correction in a favorable manner.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 illustrates an example of the external appearance of an image capture apparatus;

FIG. 2 is a perspective view illustrating a gimbal vibration isolation mechanism;

FIG. 3 is an exploded perspective view illustrating the gimbal vibration isolation mechanism;

FIG. 4 is a perspective view illustrating the gimbal vibration isolation mechanism viewed in a direction different from that in FIG. 2;

FIG. 5 is an exploded perspective view illustrating the gimbal vibration isolation mechanism viewed from a direction different from that in FIG. 3;

FIG. 6 illustrates the configuration of the image capture apparatus;

FIG. 7 illustrates the configuration of an image-blur correction control unit;

FIG. 8 is a flowchart illustrating an operation of the image-blur correction control unit;

FIG. 9 illustrates a limitation operation performed on a correction control signal;

FIG. 10 is a flowchart illustrating the limitation operation on correction control signals;

FIG. 11 illustrates a limitation operation performed on the correction control signal;

FIG. 12 illustrates an example of a limitation operation on the correction control signals;

FIG. 13 illustrates a second limitation operation;

FIG. 14 is a flowchart illustrating a third limitation operation; and

FIGS. 15A to 15C illustrate the third limitation operation.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF EMBODIMENTS

Embodiments for implementing the present technology will be described below. The description will be given in the following order:

1. Example of External Appearance of Image Capture Apparatus
2. Configuration of Image-Blur Correction Device
3. Configuration of Image Capture Apparatus
4. Operation of Image-Blur Correction Control Unit
 - 4-1. First Limitation Operation on Drive Currents
 - 4-2. Second Limitation Operation on Drive Currents
 - 4-3. Third Limitation Operation on Drive Currents
 - 4-4. Other Limitation Operations on Drive Currents
5. Other Configurations and Operations of Image Capture Apparatus

<1. Example of External Appearance of Image Capture Apparatus>

FIG. 1 illustrates an example of the external appearance of an image capture apparatus, for example, a video camera, employing an image-blur correction device according to an embodiment of the present technology. The image-blur correction device according to the embodiment of the present technology can be applied to not only video cameras but also still cameras as well as mobile phones, communication terminal apparatuses, and so on having image-capture functions.

An image capture apparatus **10** has a microphone **101**, a zoom lever **102**, a shoot button **103**, and so on at an upper surface thereof. A battery **104** is fitted in a back surface of the image capture apparatus **10**. The image capture apparatus has a flash **105** at a top portion of a front surface thereof. The flash **105** emits fill light forward. A display panel portion **106** is pivotably and rotatably coupled to a side surface portion of the image capture apparatus **10**. The image capture apparatus **10** has a lens unit **30** at a front portion thereof. A finder portion **107** is coupled to a back end portion of the image capture apparatus **10**.

<2. Configuration of Image-Blur Correction Device>

The image-blur correction device has a lens unit, a shake detecting unit, an image-blur correcting unit, and an image-blur correction control unit. The lens unit has an image-capture optical system and an image capture unit, which generates an image signal of a captured image. The shake detecting unit detects a shake applied to the lens unit. The image-blur correcting unit performs image-blur correction by pivoting the lens unit in a first direction and in a second direction. The first direction is an axial rotation direction of a first pivot axis that is orthogonal to the optical axis of the image-capture optical system, and the second direction is an axial rotation direction of a second pivot axis that is orthogonal to the optical axis and the first pivot axis. In addition, the image-blur correction control unit drives the image-blur correcting unit in accordance with a shake detected by the shake detecting unit.

5

The image-blur correcting unit is implemented by, for example, a gimbal vibration isolation mechanism for correcting image blur by pivoting the lens unit in a yaw direction and in a pitch direction.

FIGS. 2 and 4 are perspective views of a gimbal vibration isolation mechanism, and FIGS. 3 and 5 are exploded perspective views thereof. A gimbal vibration isolation mechanism 15 has an outer frame 16, an inner frame 17, and a holding frame 18.

The outer frame 16 is constituted by joining a first member 160 and a second member 165.

The first member 160 is constituted by forming, in a continuous manner, a right end portion of a first surface portion 161 that faces in up and down directions and an upper end portion of a second surface portion 162 that faces in left and right directions. The first surface portion 161 has a through hole 161a at a center portion thereof. The second surface portion 162 has a pair of columnar portions 163 and a coupling portion 164. The columnar portions 163 are located at the front and back of the second surface portion 162 and extend generally in the up and down directions. The coupling portion 164 extends in the front and back directions and couples lower end portions of the columnar portions 163.

The second member 165 is constituted by forming, in a continuous manner, a left-end portion of a first planar portion 166 that faces in the up and down directions and a second planar portion 167 that faces in the left and right directions. The first planar portion 166 has a placement hole 166a at a center portion thereof. The second planar portion 167 has an insertion placement hole 167a at a center portion thereof.

A lower end portion of the second surface portion 162 of the first member 160 and a right end portion of the first planar portion 166 of the second member 165 are joined together by screwing or the like.

The inner frame 17 is placed inside the outer frame 16 and is constituted by joining a first supporting member 170 and a second supporting member 173.

The first supporting member 170 is configured by forming, in a continuous manner, a right end portion of a top surface portion 171 that faces in the up and down directions and an upper end portion of a right side-surface portion 172 that faces in the left and right directions. The top surface portion 171 has an insertion placement hole 171a at center portion thereof. The right side-surface portion 172 has an insertion hole 172a at a center portion thereof.

The second supporting member 173 is constituted by forming, in a continuous manner, a left-end portion of a bottom surface portion 174 that faces in the up and down directions and a lower end portion of a left side-surface portion 175 that faces in the left and right directions. The bottom surface portion 174 has, at a center portion thereof, a fitting hole for fitting a sub shaft 201. The left side-surface portion 175 has a placement hole 175a at a center portion thereof.

A lower end portion of the right side-surface portion 172 of the first supporting member 170 and a right end portion of the bottom surface portion 174 of the second supporting member 173 are joined together by screwing or the like. A left-end portion of the top surface portion 171 of the first supporting member 170 and an upper end portion of the left side-surface portion 175 of the second supporting member 173 are joined together by screwing or the like.

The holding frame 18 is placed inside the inner frame 17 and is constituted by joining a first attachment member 181 and a second attachment member 184.

The first attachment member 181 is constituted by forming, in a continuous manner, a right end portion of an upper surface portion 182 that faces in the up and down directions

6

and an upper end portion of a right side-surface portion 183 that faces in the left and right directions. The right side-surface portion 183 has an insertion placement hole 183a at a center portion thereof.

The second attachment member 184 is constituted by forming, in a continuous manner, a left-end portion of a lower surface portion 185 that faces in the up and down directions and a lower end portion of a left side-surface portion 186 that faces in the left and right directions. The left side-surface portion 186 has, at a center portion thereof, a fitting hole for fitting a sub shaft 202.

A lower end portion of the right side-surface portion 183 of the first attachment member 181 and a right end portion of the lower surface portion 185 of the second attachment member 184 are joined together by screwing or the like. A left-end portion of the upper surface portion 182 of the first attachment member 181 and an upper end portion of the left side-surface portion 186 of the second attachment member 184 are joined together by screwing or the like.

The lens unit 30 is placed inside the holding frame and includes a lens tube 31, an image-capture optical system 32, and an image capture unit 50. The image-capture optical system 32 is constituted by a plurality of lenses arranged inside the lens tube 31 in the front and back directions. The image capture unit 50 is attached to a back end portion of the image-capture optical system 32 and the lens tube 31. The lens tube 31 has a tube shape that extends in the front and back directions. The image capture unit 50 has an image capture device (not illustrated), such as a charge-coupled device (CCD) or a complementary metal-oxide semiconductor (CMOS).

A first drive motor 191 is provided above the lens unit 30. A second drive motor 192 is also provided to the right of the lens unit 30. The first drive motor 191 and the second drive motor 192 are, for example, flat motors.

The sub shaft 201 is fitted in the fitting hole in the bottom surface portion 174 of the inner frame 17. An upper end portion of the sub shaft 201 is fitted in the fitting hole, and a portion other than the upper end portion thereof protrudes downward from the bottom surface portion 174.

The sub shaft 202 is fitted in the fitting hole in the left side-surface portion 186 of the holding frame 18. A right end portion of the sub shaft 202 is fitted in the fitting hole, and a portion other than the right end portion thereof protrudes from the left side-surface portion 186 leftward.

A bearing is inserted and fitted in the placement hole 166a in the first planar portion 166 in the outer frame 16. A bearing is inserted and fitted in the placement hole 175a in the left side-surface portion 175 in the inner frame 17.

The holding frame 18 is fixed to an outer peripheral surface of the lens unit 30 by screwing or the like. With the holding frame 18 being fixed to the lens unit 30, front and back end portions of the lens unit 30 protrude from the corresponding front and back of the holding frame 18.

The second drive motor 192 is provided to the right of the holding frame 18 and is fixed to an outer surface of the right side-surface portion 183 of the holding frame 18 by screwing or the like, and.

The inner frame 17 is provided at a peripheral side of the holding frame 18. With the inner frame 17 being provided at the peripheral side of the holding frame 18, the sub shaft 202 fitted in the left side-surface portion 186 of the holding frame 18 is rotatably supported by the bearing inserted into the placement hole 175a in the left side-surface portion 175 of the inner frame 17.

The first drive motor **191** is provided above the inner frame **17** and is fixed to an upper surface of the top surface portion **171** of the inner frame **17** by screwing or the like.

With the outer frame **16** being provided at a peripheral side of the inner frame **17**, the sub shaft **201** fitted in the bottom surface portion **174** of the inner frame **17** is rotatably supported by the bearing inserted into the placement hole **166a** in the first planar portion **166** of the outer frame **16**.

In the gimbal vibration isolation mechanism **15** configured as described above, the aforementioned first pivot axis is an axis connecting a central axis of an output shaft **191a** of the first drive motor **191** and a central axis of the sub shaft **201**. The aforementioned second pivot axis is an axis connecting a central axis of an output shaft **192a** of the second drive motor **192** and a central axis of the sub shaft **202**. That is, in the gimbal vibration isolation mechanism **15**, when the first drive motor **191** is driven, the lens unit **30** is driven in the yaw direction, and when the second drive motor **192** is driven, the lens unit **30** is driven in the pitch direction. The gimbal vibration isolation mechanism illustrated in FIGS. **2** to **5** is merely exemplary and illustrative, and the image-blur correcting unit may be implemented by a mechanism for correcting image blur through driving of the lens unit, the image capture unit, a correction lens, and so on.

<3. Configuration of Image Capture Apparatus>

FIG. **6** illustrates a configuration of the image capture apparatus **10**. The image capture apparatus **10** using the image-blur correction device includes the lens unit **30**, an image-blur correcting unit **45**, a position detecting unit **46**, an image processing unit **51**, a display unit **52**, a recording unit **53**, a shake detecting unit **61**, an image-blur correction control unit **70**, a user interface unit **81**, and a control unit **85**.

The lens unit **30** includes the image-capture optical system **32**, an image-capture optical system drive unit **33**, and the image capture unit **50**.

The image-capture optical system **32** includes a focus lens **321**, a zoom lens **322**, and so on. The image-capture optical system **32** performs focus adjustment, for example, by moving the focus lens **321** in optical-axis directions. The image-capture optical system **32** also varies a focal distance by moving the zoom lens **322** in the optical-axis directions.

The image-capture optical system drive unit **33** drives the focus lens **321** and the zoom lens **322** on the basis of a control signal from the control unit **85** (described below).

The image capture unit **50** includes an image capture device, a preprocessing unit, an image-capture drive unit, and so on. The image capture device performs photoelectric conversion processing to convert an optical image, formed on an image capture plane by the image-capture optical system **32**, into an electrical signal. The image capture device is implemented by, for example, a charge-coupled device (CCD) image sensor or a complementary metal-oxide semiconductor (CMOS) image sensor. The preprocessing unit performs noise removal processing, such as correlated double sampling (CDS), on the electrical signal generated by the image capture device. The preprocessing unit performs gain adjustment for setting a signal level of the electrical signal to a desired signal level. In addition, the preprocessing unit performs analog-to-digital (A/D) conversion processing to convert an analog image signal, which is an electrical signal subjected to the noise removal processing and the gain adjustment, into a digital image signal, and outputs the digital image signal to the image processing unit **51**. On the basis of a control signal from the control unit **85** (described below), the image-capture drive unit generates, for example, operation pulses used for driving the image capture device. For example, the image-capture drive unit generates a charge read pulse for reading

charge, a transfer pulse for performing vertical and horizontal transfer, and a shutter pulse for performing an electronic shutter operation, and so on.

On the basis of a drive current supplied from the image-blur correction control unit **70**, the image-blur correcting unit **45** rotates the lens unit **30** in the yaw direction and the pitch direction, as described above. The position detecting unit **46** generates detection signals corresponding to the position of the lens unit **30** and outputs the generated detection signals to the image-blur correction control unit **70**. For example, the detection signals output to the image-blur correction control unit **70** are signals generated by hall effect devices **46ya** (**46yb**) and **46pa** (**46pb**).

The image processing unit **51** performs, for example, camera-process processing on the digital image signal output from the image capture unit **50**. The image processing unit **51** performs, for example, color correction processing, contour enhancement processing, and nonlinear processing, such as gamma correction and knee correction, on the image signal. The image processing unit **51** outputs an image signal resulting from the processing to the display unit **52** and/or the recording unit **53**.

The display unit **52** serves as a display panel and an electronic viewfinder and, for example, displays a through-the-camera-lens image on the basis of the image signal output from the image processing unit **51**. The display unit **52** also performs menu display, operating-state display, and so on for operation setting of the image capture apparatus **10**. When the number of display pixels is smaller than that of a captured image, the display unit **52** performs processing for converting the captured image into a display image corresponding to the number of display pixels.

The recording unit **53** records the image signal, output from the image processing unit **51**, to a recording medium. The recording medium may be, for example, a detachable medium, such as a memory card, an optical disk, or a magnetic tape, as well as a fixed-type hard disk drive (HDD) or a semiconductor memory module. The recording unit **53** may be provided with an encoder and a decoder to perform compression encoding and decompression decoding on the image signal to record an encoded signal to the recording medium. The recording unit **53** may also be configured to read an image signal or an encoded signal recorded on the recording medium and to display a recorded image on the display unit **52**.

The shake detecting unit **61** is implemented by a sensor, for example, an acceleration sensor or gyro-sensor, for detecting a shake applied to the image capture apparatus **10** (the lens unit **30**). The shake detecting unit **61** detects a shake applied to the image capture apparatus **10** (the lens unit **30**) and outputs a detection result to the image-blur correction control unit **70**.

The image-blur correction control unit **70** generates a drive current on the basis of the shake detected by the shake detecting unit **61** and a lens unit **30** position detected by the position detecting unit **46**. The image-blur correction control unit **70** supplies the generated drive current to the image-blur correcting unit **45**, so as to allow the image capture unit **50** to generate an image signal of a captured image in which image blur is corrected.

The user interface unit **81** includes the zoom lever, the shoot button, and so on. The user interface unit **81** generates an operation signal corresponding to a user operation and outputs the generated operation signal to the control unit **85**.

The control unit **85** includes, for example, a central processing unit (CPU), a read only memory (ROM), and a random access memory (RAM). The CPU reads a control pro-

gram stored in the ROM and executes the control program, as appropriate. The ROM pre-stores therein programs executed by the CPU, data used for various types of processing, and so on. The RAM is a memory used as a so-called “work area” for temporarily storing results obtained during processing. The ROM or the RAM also stores therein various types of control information, correction data, and so on. In accordance with operation signals and so on from the user interface unit **81**, the control unit **85** controls various units to cause the image capture apparatus **10** to perform an operation corresponding to a user operation. The control unit **85** also controls the image-blur correction control unit **70** to cause it to perform image-blur correction operation.

FIG. 7 illustrates the configuration of the image-blur correction control unit **70**. The image-blur correction control unit **70** includes an amount-of-shake determining unit **71**, a target-position calculating unit **72**, a present-position calculating unit **73**, an arithmetic unit **74**, a servo arithmetic unit **75**, and a drive unit **76**.

The amount-of-shake determining unit **71** determines the amount of shake applied to the image capture apparatus **10** (the lens unit **30**), on the basis of a detection signal supplied from the shake detecting unit **61**. The amount-of-shake determining unit **71** outputs the determined amount of shake to the target-position calculating unit **72**.

On the basis of the amount of shake determined by the amount-of-shake determining unit **71**, the target-position calculating unit **72** calculates a lens unit **30** position at which the image capture unit **50** can generate an image signal of a captured image having no image blur, and outputs the calculated position to the arithmetic unit **74** as a target position.

The present-position calculating unit **73** calculates the present position of the lens unit **30** on the basis of detection signals from the position detecting unit **46**, for example, detection signals generated by the hall effect devices **46ya** (**46yb**) and **46pa** (**46pb**). The present-position calculating unit **73** outputs the calculated present position to the arithmetic unit **74**.

The arithmetic unit **74** calculates an error between the target position and the present position and outputs a position error signal indicating the amount of the calculated error to the servo arithmetic unit **75**.

The servo arithmetic unit **75** generates correction control signals so that the amount of error calculated by the arithmetic unit **74** reaches “0” and outputs the generated correction control signals to the drive unit **76**.

On the basis of the correction control signal from the servo arithmetic unit **75**, the drive unit **76** generates a first drive current for driving a first correction mechanism in the gimbal vibration isolation mechanism **15**, for example, the first drive motor **191** in the image-blur correcting unit **45**. The drive unit **76** also generates a second drive current for driving a second correction mechanism in the gimbal vibration isolation mechanism **15**, for example, the second drive motor **192** in the image-blur correcting unit **45**. The drive unit **76** outputs the generated first drive current to the first correction mechanism and outputs the generated second drive current to the second correction mechanism. As described above, the drive unit **76** generates drive currents on the basis of the correction control signals supplied from the servo arithmetic unit **75**. The drive unit **76** also supplies the generated drive currents to the image-blur correcting unit **45** to thereby cause the image-blur correcting unit **45** to drive the lens unit **30** so that the lens unit **30** reaches the target position calculated by the target-position calculating unit **72**.

In addition, the drive unit **76** limits the first drive current to a first limit value, limits the second drive current to a second

limit value, and limits a total value of the first drive current and the second drive current to a third limit value that is smaller than the total value of the first limit value and the second limit value. The drive unit also varies the first limit value by changing a power-supply time of the first drive current and varies the second limit value by changing a power-supply time of the second drive current.

The drive unit **76** has, for example, a drive-current limiting unit **761** and a drive-current output unit **762**. The drive-current limiting unit **761** performs limitation operation on the correction control signals from the servo arithmetic unit **75**. In the limitation operation, the drive-current limiting unit **761** limits the first drive current to the first limit value, limits the second drive current to the second limit value, and limits the total value of the first drive current and the second drive current to the third limit value that is smaller than the total value of the first limit value and the second limit value. The drive-current limiting unit **761** also varies the first limit value by changing the power-supply time of the first drive current and varies the second limit value by changing the power-supply time of the second drive current. For example, the drive-current limiting unit **761** increases the first limit value by reducing the power-supply time in which the first drive current is limited to the first limit value and increases the second limit value by reducing the power-supply time in which the second drive current is limited to the second limit value. The drive-current limiting unit **761** outputs correction control signals subjected to the limitation operation to the drive-current output unit **762**.

On the basis of the correction control signals limited by the drive-current limiting unit **761**, the drive-current output unit **762** generates a first drive current and a second drive current and outputs the generated drive currents to the image-blur correcting unit **45**.

As described above, on the basis of the detection result of the shake detecting unit **61** and the present position of the lens unit **30**, the image-blur correction control unit **70** performs feedback control so as to allow the image capture unit **50** to generate an image signal of a captured image in which image blur is corrected.

<4. Operation of Image-Blur Correction Control Unit>

FIG. 8 is a flowchart illustrating an operation of the image-blur correction control unit **70**. In step ST1, the image-blur correction control unit **70** performs initial setting. More specifically, the image-blur correction control unit **70** performs initial setting for parameters used for servo arithmetic operation, limit values and limit times used for limiting the correction control signals, and so on. The process then proceeds to step ST2.

In step ST2, the image-blur correction control unit **70** calculates a target position. More specifically, on the basis of a detection signal supplied from the shake detecting unit **61**, the image-blur correction control unit **70** calculates the amount of shake applied to the image capture apparatus **10** (the lens unit **30**). On the basis of the calculated amount of shake, the image-blur correction control unit **70** calculates, as a target position, a lens unit **30** position at which the image capture unit **50** can generate an image signal of a captured image having no image blur. The process then proceeds to step ST3.

In step ST3, the image-blur correction control unit determines a present position. More specifically, the image-blur correction control unit **70** obtains detection signals from the position detecting unit **46** and calculates and determines the present position of the lens unit **30** on the basis of the obtained detection signals. The process then proceeds to step ST4.

11

In step ST4, the image-blur correction control unit 70 calculates a position error. More specifically, the image-blur correction control unit 70 calculates an error between the target position and the present position and generates a position error signal indicating the calculated error. The process then proceeds to step ST5.

In step ST5, the image-blur correction control unit generates correction control signals. For example, the image-blur correction control unit 70 generates a proportional control signal by multiplying the position error signal by a proportional gain. The image-blur correction control unit 70 also generates a differential control signal by multiplying a differentiation signal of the position error signal by a differential gain. The image-blur correction control unit 70 generates an integral control signal by multiplying an integral signal of the position error signal by an integral gain. The image-blur correction control unit 70 further adds the proportional control signal, the differential control signal, and the integral control signal to generate a control signal and sets the control signal as a correction control signal used for generating each drive current. The process then proceeds to step ST6.

In step ST6, the image-blur correction control unit 70 performs limitation operation on the drive currents. For example, the image-blur correction control unit 70 performs limitation so that the first drive current for driving the first drive motor 191 in the gimbal vibration isolation mechanism 15 does not exceed the first limit value. The image-blur correction control unit 70 also performs limitation so that the second drive current for driving the second drive motor 192 in the gimbal vibration isolation mechanism 15 does not exceed the second limit value. The image-blur correction control unit 70 further performs limitation so that the total value of the first drive current and the second drive current does not exceed the third limit value. The process then proceeds to step ST7. In the drive-current limitation processing, the image-blur correction control unit 70 limits, for example, signal levels and times of the correction control signals generated in step ST5 so that the drive currents do not exceed the corresponding limit values.

In step ST7, the image-blur correction control unit 70 outputs the drive currents. More specifically, the image-blur correction control unit 70 supplies the first drive current and the second drive current, subjected to the limitation processing, to the corresponding first and second drive motors 191 and 192 to cause the image-blur correcting unit 45 to drive the lens unit 30, thereby correcting the shake applied to the image capture apparatus 10 (the lens unit 30). The process then returns to step ST2. Any of the process in step ST2 and the process in step ST3 may be performed earlier.

[4-1. First Limitation Operation on Drive Currents]

Next, a first limitation operation on drive currents, the limitation operation being performed by the image-blur correction control unit 70, will be described in detail. The drive unit 76 in the image-blur correction control unit 70 includes, for example, the drive-current limiting unit 761 and the drive-current output unit 762, as described above. The drive-current output unit 762 is implemented by, for example, a semiconductor device or the like (hereinafter referred to as a "drive device") for driving the motors. The drive-current limiting unit 761 limits the correction control signals so that each of the first drive current and the second drive current does not exceed a maximum rated output current and a maximum rated output peak current of the drive device. During output of the first drive current and the second drive current, the drive-current limiting unit 761 also limits the correction control signals so that a rated value of a power-supply unit that supplies power to the drive-current output unit 762 is not

12

exceeded. In addition, during limitation of the correction control signals so that the maximum rated output peak current is not exceeded, the drive-current limiting unit 761 limits the time for the maximum rated output peak current so that it does not exceed a pre-specified peak-current limit time. By limiting the time so that it does not exceed the peak-current limit time, that is, by reducing the power-supply time in which the drive current is limited to the limit value, it is possible to achieve a limit value corresponding to the maximum rated output peak current, which is a current larger than the maximum rated output current. For the limitation operation on the correction control signals, the limit values may also be set so that values obtained after derating the maximum rated output current, the maximum rated output peak current, and so on are not exceeded. Such an arrangement allows the limitation operation to be performed with margins for the maximum rated values.

FIG. 9 illustrates the limitation operation performed on the correction control signals. The drive unit 76 limits the first drive current to the first limit value by limiting a signal level of a correction control signal CYa and limits the second drive current to the second limit value by limiting a signal level of a correction control signal CPa. The drive unit 76 further limits the first drive current and the second drive current to the third limit value by limiting the signal levels of the correction control signals CYa and CPa.

In FIG. 9, a limit line PWL (indicated by a dashed line) represents limit values of the correction control signals when the first drive current and the second drive current are limited to the third limit value. In order to limit the first drive current to the first limit value, for example, an output-current limit value LYm, a peak-current limit value LYp, and a minimum-current limit value LYs are provided for the correction control signal CYa. In order to limit the second drive current to the second limit value, for example, an output-current limit value LPm, a peak-current limit value LPp, and a minimum-current limit value LPs are provided for the correction control signal CPa.

The output-current limit value LYm is a limit value for limiting the correction control signal CYa so that the first drive current does not exceed the maximum rated output current.

The peak-current limit value LYp is a limit value for limiting the correction control signal CYa so that the first drive current does not exceed, for example, the maximum rated output peak current (a current that can be output in a pre-specified short period of time).

The minimum-current limit value LYs is a limit value for limiting the correction control signal CYa so that, even during the shake correction in the pitch direction, a minimum level of the first drive current is ensured and the shake correction effect in the yaw direction is obtained. For example, when the first drive current and the second drive current are limited since the drive currents to be used are large, and the limited first drive current is too small, there is a possibility that the shake correction in the yaw direction is not performed when the shake correction is performed in the pitch direction. Thus, when the correction control signal CYa corresponding to the first drive current used for the shake correction is larger than or equal to the minimum-current limit value LYs, even if the first drive current and the second drive current are limited, the first drive current corresponding to the correction control signal CYa having the minimum-current limit value LYs is output. Such an arrangement allows for the shake correction in the yaw direction.

The output-current limit value LP_m is a limit value for limiting the correction control signal CP_a so that the second drive current does not exceed, for example, the maximum rated output current.

The peak-current limit value LP_p is a limit value for limiting the correction control signal CP_a so that the second drive current does not exceed, for example, the maximum rated output peak current (a current that can be output in a pre-specified short period of time).

The minimum-current limit value LP_s is a limit value for limiting the correction control signal CP_a so that, even during the shake correction in the yaw direction, a minimum second drive current is ensured and the shake correction effect in the pitch direction is obtained. For example, when the first drive current and the second drive current are limited since drive currents to be used are large, and the limited second drive current is too small, there is a possibility that vertical movement in the image capture direction by the weight of the gimbal vibration isolation mechanism **15**, the lens unit **30**, and so on is not corrected. Thus, when the correction control signal CP_a corresponding to the second drive current to be used for the shake correction is larger than or equal to the minimum-current limit value LP_s , even if the first drive current and the second drive current are limited, the second drive current corresponding to the correction control signal CP_a having the minimum-current limit value LP_s is output. Such an arrangement allows for the shake correction in the pitch direction.

In FIG. 9, an area ARY_1 is an area in which the signal level of the correction control signal CY_a is larger than the limit line PWL or the peak-current limit value LY_p and the correction control signal CP_a is smaller than the minimum-current limit value LP_s .

An area ARp_1 is an area in which the signal level of the correction control signal CP_a is larger than the limit line PWL or the peak-current limit value LP_p and the correction control signal CY_a is smaller than the minimum-current limit value LY_s .

An area ARY_2 is, in an area in which the signal level of the correction control signal CY_a is larger than the limit line PWL and the signal level of the correction control signal CP_a is larger than or equal to the minimum-current limit value LP_s , an area in which a multiplication result obtained by multiplying a reduction rate kp , with which the signal level of the correction control signal CP_a is the minimum-current limit value LP_s , by the signal level of the correction control signal CY_a is larger than the limit line PWL .

An area ARp_2 is, in an area in which the signal level of the correction control signal CP_a is larger than the limit line PWL and the signal level of the correction control signal CY_a is larger than or equal to the minimum-current limit value LY_s , an area in which a multiplication result obtained by multiplying a reduction rate ky , with which the signal level of the correction control signal CY_a is the minimum-current limit value LY_s , by the signal level of the correction control signal CP_a is larger than the limit line PWL .

An area $ARpy$ is an area obtained by removing the area ARY_2 and the area ARp_2 from an area in which the signal levels of the correction control signals CY_a and CP_a are larger than the limit line PWL , the signal level of the correction control signal CY_a is larger than or equal to the minimum-current limit value LY_s , and the signal level of the correction control signal CP_a is larger than or equal to the minimum-current limit value LP_s .

The drive-current limiting unit **761** performs limitation operation on the correction control signals CY_a and CP_a from the servo arithmetic unit **75**. In the limitation operation, the

drive-current limiting unit **761** limits the signal levels so that the first drive current does not exceed the first limit value, the second drive current does not exceed the second limit value, and the total value of the first drive current and the second drive current does not exceed the third limit value. The drive-current limiting unit **761** also performs the limitation operation so that the corresponding power-supply times are not exceeded. The drive-current limiting unit **761** supplies correction control signals CY_b and CP_b resulting from the limitation to the drive-current output unit **762** to cause it to output the first drive current and the second drive current.

In this case, when the signal levels of the correction control signals CY_a and CP_a are in the region ARY_1 , the signal level of only the correction control signal CY_a is limited. In the signal level limitation, when the correction control signal CY_a exceeds the output-current limit value LY_m , the correction control signal CY_a is limited to a value that is smaller than or equal to the peak-current limit value LY_p within a preset limit time. When the time in which the correction control signal CY_a exceeds the output-current limit value LY_m exceeds the limit time, the correction control signal CY_a is limited to a value that is smaller than or equal to the output-current limit value LY_m .

When the signal levels of the correction control signals CY_a and CP_a are in the region ARp_1 , the signal level of only the correction control signal CP_a is limited. In the signal level limitation, when the correction control signal CP_a exceeds the output-current limit value LP_m , the correction control signal CP_a is limited to a value that is smaller than or equal to the peak-current limit value LP_p within a preset limit time. When the time in which the correction control signal CP_a exceeds the output-current limit value LP_m exceeds the limit time, the correction control signal CP_a is limited to the output-current limit value LP_m .

When the signal levels of the correction control signals CY_a and CP_a are in the region ARY_2 , the correction control signal CP_a is set to the minimum-current limit value LP_s . The correction control signal CY_a is limited according to the limit value for the correction control signal CY_a when the correction control signal CP_a has the minimum-current limit value LP_s . In this case, when the limit value for the correction control signal CY_a exceeds the output-current limit value LY_m , the correction control signal CY_a is set to a value that is smaller than or equal to the peak-current limit value LY_p within a preset limit time. When the time in which the limit value for the correction control signal CY_a exceeds the output-current limit value LY_m exceeds the limit time, the correction control signal CY_a is limited to the output-current limit value LY_m .

When the signal levels of the correction control signals CY_a and CP_a are in the region ARp_2 , the correction control signal CY_a is set to the minimum-current limit value LY_s . The correction control signal CP_a is limited according to the limit value for the correction control signal CP_a when the correction control signal CY_a has the minimum-current limit value LY_s . In this case, when the limit value for the correction control signal CP_a exceeds the output-current limit value LP_m , the correction control signal CP_a is limited to a value that is smaller than or equal to the peak-current limit value LP_p within a preset limit time. When the time in which the limit value for the correction control signal CP_a exceeds the output-current limit value LP_m exceeds the limit time, the correction control signal CP_a is limited to the output-current limit value LP_m .

When the signal levels of the correction control signals CY_a and CP_a are in the area $ARpy$, the limitation of one drive current and the limitation of the other drive current are per-

formed in association with each other. For example, the signal levels of the correction control signals CY_a and CP_a are multiplied by the same reduction rate to limit the correction control signals CY_a and CP_a so that they are smaller than or equal to the limit line PWL and are smaller than or equal to the corresponding output-current limit values LY_m and LP_m . In the signal level limitation, when the correction control signal CY_a exceeds the output-current limit value LY_m , the correction control signal CY_a is limited to a value that is smaller than or equal to the peak-current limit value LY_p within a preset limit time. After the limit time elapses, the correction control signal CY_a is limited to a value that is smaller than or equal to the output-current limit value LY_m . When the correction control signal CP_a exceeds the output-current limit value LP_m , the correction control signal CP_a is limited to a value that is smaller than or equal to the peak-current limit value LP_p within a preset limit time. After the limit time elapses, the correction control signal CP_a is limited to the output-current limit value LP_m .

Next, the limitation operation on the correction control signals will be described with reference to a flowchart illustrated in FIG. 10. FIG. 10 illustrates a case for the correction control signal CY_a . In the initial setting in step $ST1$ described above and illustrated in FIG. 8, for example, the peak-current limit value LY_p is set so that it does not exceed the maximum rated output peak current value (the current value in a peak-current limit time T_p). A limit time TL_p of the limitation operation using the peak-current limit value LY_p is also set to the peak-current limit time T_p . In addition, "0" is set for a limit elapsed time t_{mp} in which the limitation operation using the peak-current limit value LY_p is performed and for a reset elapsed time t_{mr} in which the limitation operation is reset.

In step $ST11$, the drive unit 76 determines whether or not the correction control signal CY_a supplied from the servo arithmetic unit 75 exceeds the output-current limit value LY_m . When the correction control signal CY_a exceeds the output-current limit value LY_m , the process of the drive unit proceeds to step $ST12$, and when the correction control signal CY_a does not exceed the output-current limit value LY_m , the process proceeds to step $ST15$.

In step $ST12$, the drive unit 76 measures the limit elapsed time t_{mp} . More specifically, the drive unit 76 starts the limitation operation for limiting the correction control signal CY_a to a value that is smaller than or equal to the peak-current limit value LY_p and measures the limit elapsed time t_{mp} . During the limitation operation, the drive unit 76 continues the measurement of the limit elapsed time t_{mp} . In addition, during the limitation operation, the drive unit 76 sets "0" for the reset elapsed time t_{mr} , which is the time in which the limitation operation is reset. The process then proceeds to step $ST13$.

In step $ST13$, the drive unit 76 determines whether or not the limit elapsed time t_{mp} has exceeded the limit time TL_p . When the limit elapsed time t_{mp} has exceeded the limit time TL_p , the process of the drive unit 76 proceeds to step $ST14$, and when the limit elapsed time t_{mp} has not exceeded the limit time TL_p , the process proceeds to step $ST7$ in FIG. 8.

In step $ST14$, the drive unit 76 resets the limitation operation. That is, the drive unit 76 ends the limitation operation for limiting the correction control signal CY_a to a value that is smaller than or equal to the peak-current limit value LY_p and changes the limit value from the peak-current limit value LY_p to a reset limit value LY_r , which is a limit value during a reset operation. The drive unit 76 also ends the measurement of the limit elapsed time t_{mp} , and then the process proceeds to step $ST7$ in FIG. 8. The reset limit value LY_r is set to, for example, the output-current limit value LY_m so that the first drive current does not exceed the maximum rated output current.

When the process proceeds from step $ST11$ to step $ST15$, the drive unit 76 measures the reset elapsed time t_{mr} . The drive unit 76 starts the reset operation for limiting the correction control signal CY_a to a value that is smaller than or equal to the reset limit value LY_r and measures the reset elapsed time t_{mr} . During the reset operation, the drive unit 76 also continues the measurement of the reset elapsed time t_{mr} . In addition, during the reset operation, the drive unit 76 sets "0" for the limit elapsed time t_{mp} . The process then proceeds to step $ST16$.

In step $ST16$, the drive unit 76 determines whether or not the reset elapsed time t_{mr} has exceeded a preset reset end time TL_r . When the reset elapsed time t_{mr} has exceeded the reset end time TL_r , the process of the drive unit 76 proceeds to step $ST17$, and when the reset elapsed time t_{mr} has not exceeded the preset reset end time TL_r , the process proceeds to step $ST7$ in FIG. 8. The reset end time TL_r is a time from when the limitation operation is performed until a next limitation operation can be performed, and is pre-determined according to a rated value of the drive-current output unit 762 or the like.

In step $ST17$, the drive unit 76 performs a reset release operation. That is, the drive unit 76 ends the reset operation for limiting the correction control signal CY_a to a value that is smaller than or equal to the reset limit value LY_r and changes the limit value from the reset limit value LY_r to the peak-current limit value LY_p . The drive unit 76 also ends the measurement of the reset elapsed time t_{mr} . The process then proceeds to step $ST7$ in FIG. 8.

FIG. 11 illustrates the limitation operation performed on the correction control signal CY_a . The drive unit 76 performs the processing in the flowchart illustrated in FIG. 10, and when the correction control signal CY_a exceeds the output-current limit value $LY_m (=LY_r)$ at time $t1$, the drive unit 76 limits the correction control signal CY_a to a value that is smaller than or equal to the peak-current limit value LY_p , as illustrated in FIG. 11. When the duration in which the correction control signal CY_a exceeds the output-current limit value LY_m exceeds the limit time TL_p at time $t2$, the drive unit 76 limits the correction control signal CY_a to a value that is smaller than or equal to the reset limit value $LY_r (=LY_m)$ until time $t3$ at which the reset end time TL_r is exceeded. The drive unit 76 performs such limitation processing, generates a first drive current on the basis of a correction control signal CY_b resulting from the limitation, and outputs the first drive current. The drive unit 76 performs such processing on not only the correction control signal CY_a but also the correction control signal CP_a , generates a second drive current on the basis of a correction control signal CP_b resulting from limitation, and outputs the second drive current.

FIG. 12 illustrates an example of a limitation operation on the correction control signals CY_a and CP_a . When the correction control signals CY_a and CP_a are at a position $P1$ in the area $ARY1$ in FIG. 12, the drive unit 76 limits only the correction control signal CY_a since the correction control signal CP_a is smaller than the minimum-current limit value LP_s . In addition, since the correction control signal CY_a exceeds the output-current limit value LY_m , the drive unit 76 limits the correction control signal CY_a to a value (position $P1'$) that is smaller than or equal to the peak-current limit value LY_p and the limit line PWL . Additionally, the drive unit 76 measures the elapsed time in which the correction control signal CY_a exceeds the output-current limit value LY_m , and when the elapsed time exceeds the limit time TL_p , the drive unit 76 limits the correction control signal CY_a to a value (position $P1''$) that is smaller than or equal to the reset limit value $LY_r (=LY_m)$.

When the correction control signals CY_a and CP_a are at a position $P2$ in the area $ARy2$, the drive unit **76** sets the correction control signal CP_a to the minimum-current limit value LPs . The drive unit **76** also multiplies the reduction rate kp , with which the signal level of the correction control signal CP_a is the minimum-current limit value LPs , by the signal level of the correction control signal CY_a . Since the multiplication result exceeds the output-current limit value LYm , the drive unit **76** limits the correction control signal CY_a to a value (position $P2'$) that is smaller than or equal to the peak-current limit value LYp and is smaller than or equal to the limit line PWL . In addition, the drive unit **76** measures the elapsed time in which the correction control signal CY_a exceeds the output-current limit value LYm , and when the elapsed time exceeds the limit time TLp , the drive unit **76** limits the correction control signal CY_a to the reset limit value $LYr (=LYm)$ (position $P2''$).

When the correction control signals CY_a and CP_a are at a position $P3$ in the area $ARpy$, the drive unit **76** multiplies the correction control signals CY_a and CP_a by the same reduction rate to limit the correction control signals CY_a and CP_a to values (position $P3'$) that are the smaller than or equal to values at positions on the limit line PWL . In this case, since the correction control signal CY_a exceeds the output-current limit value LYm , the drive unit **76** limits the correction control signal CY_a to a value that is smaller than or equal to the peak-current limit value LYp . In addition, the drive unit **76** measures the elapsed time in which the correction control signal CY_a exceeds the output-current limit value LYm , and when the elapsed time exceeds the limit time TLp , the drive unit **76** limits the correction control signal CY_a to the reset limit value $LYr (=LYm)$ (position $P3''$).

When the correction control signals CY_a and CP_a are at a position $P4$ in the area $ARpy$, the drive unit **76** multiplies the correction control signals CY_a and CP_a by the same reduction rate to limit the correction control signals CY_a and CP_a to values (position $P4'$) that are smaller than or equal to positions on the limit line PWL . In this case, at any position on the limit line PWL , the correction control signal CY_a is smaller than or equal to the output-current limit value LYm , and the correction control signal CP_a is smaller than or equal to the output-current limit value LPm . Thus, the drive unit **76** limits the correction control signal CY_a to a value that is smaller than or equal to the output-current limit value LYm and limits the correction control signal CP_a to a value that is smaller than or equal to the output-current limit value LPm .

As a result of such processing, for example, when the correction control signal CY_a exceeds the output-current limit value LYm and the elapsed time is within the range of the limit time TLp , the limit value for the correction control signal CY_a is changed to the peak-current limit value LYp that is larger than the output-current limit value LYm . Thus, it is possible to increase the amount of current of the first drive current, compared with a case in which the correction control signal CY_a is limited to a value that is smaller than or equal to the output-current limit value LYm . That is, the drive motor **191** can generate high torque. When similar limitation is also performed on the correction control signal CP_a , it is possible to increase the amount of current of the second drive current, compared with a case in which the correction control signal CP_a is limited using the output-current limit value LPm . That is, the second drive motor **192** can generate high torque. Thus, when a large shake occurs, a larger drive current than that in the related art can be supplied to thereby make it possible to enhance the shake correction performance. It is also possible

to obtain favorable shake correction performance, without using a semiconductor device having a large rated output current.

In addition, when the correction control signal CY_a is larger than or equal to the minimum-current limit value LYs , the correction control signal CY_b resulting from the limitation is larger than or equal to the minimum-current limit value LYs even when the correction control signal CY_a is limited. When the correction control signal CP_a is larger than or equal to the minimum-current limit value LPs , the correction control signal CP_b resulting from limitation is larger than or equal to the minimum-current limit value LPs even when the correction control signal CP_a is limited. Accordingly, when a large drive current is involved in either the yaw direction or the pitch direction, a drive current corresponding to the minimum-current limit value is supplied for the shake correction in the other direction. Thus, it is possible to avoid a reduction in the shake correction performance in the other direction.

[4-2. Second Limitation Operation on Drive Currents]

Meanwhile, in a case in which the limitation of one drive current and the limitation of the other drive current are performed in association with each other, when the same reduction rate is used to limit the correction control signals CY_a and CP_a in the manner illustrated in FIG. 9, the drive unit **76** calculates the reduction rate corresponding to the signal levels of the correction control signals CY_a and CP_a . By performing multiplication processing using the calculated reduction rate, the drive unit **76** also calculates the limited correction control signals CY_b and CP_b .

Accordingly, a description for a second limitation operation will be given of an operation in which, when the correction control signals CY_a and CP_a are in the range of the area $ARpy$, the amount of limitation of one drive current is set to an amount of limitation corresponding to the amount of limitation of the other drive current to thereby make it easier to limit the correction control signals CY_a and CP_a .

FIG. 13 illustrates the second limitation operation. In the second limitation operation, the reduction rate in the area $ARpy$ is fixed. For example, when the correction control signals CY_a and CP_a are limited so as to lie on a line with a gradient of 45° (hereinafter referred to as a "reduction line"), the amount of limitation of the correction control signal CY_a and the amount of limitation of the correction control signal CP_a become equal to each other. Thus, with respect to any position in the area $ARpy$, for example, when a position obtained by reducing the correction control signal CY_a by an amount of limitation "dL" lies at a position on the limit line PWL , reducing the correction control signal CP_a by the amount of limitation "dL" makes it possible to bring the correction control signal CP_a to a position on the limit line PWL .

Accordingly, it is possible to easily perform the limitation processing without performing calculation of the reduction rate corresponding to the signal levels of the correction control signals CY_a and CP_a and performing the multiplication processing using the calculated reduction rate.

For example, when the correction control signals CY_a and CP_a are at a position $P3$ in the area $ARpy$, the drive unit **76** brings the correction control signals CY_a and CP_a to a position (position $P3'$) on the limit line PWL by reducing the correction control signals CY_a and CP_a by an amount of limitation "dLa". In this case, since the correction control signal CY_a exceeds the output-current limit value LYm , the drive unit **76** limits the correction control signal CY_a to a value that is smaller than or equal to the peak-current limit value LYp . In addition, the drive unit **76** measures the elapsed time in which the correction control signal CY_a exceeds the

output-current limit value LY_m , and when the elapsed time exceeds the limit time TL_p , the drive unit **76** limits the correction control signal CY_a to the reset limit value $LY_r (=LY_m)$ (position $P3$ ”).

When the correction control signals CY_a and CP_a are at a position $P4$ in the area AR_{py} , the drive unit **76** brings the correction control signals CY_a and CP_a to a position (position $P4'$) on the limit line PWL by reducing the correction control signals CY_a and CP_a by an amount of limitation “ dLb ”. In this case, the position on the limit line PWL is a position where the correction control signal CY_a is smaller than or equal to the output-current limit value LY_m and the correction control signal CP_a is smaller than or equal to the output-current limit value LPM . Accordingly, the drive unit **76** limits the correction control signal CY_a to a value that is smaller than or equal to the output-current limit value LY_m and limits the correction control signal CP_a to a value that is smaller than or equal to the output-current limit value LPM .

Such a limitation operation makes it possible to easily perform the limitation operation in the area AR_{py} . The gradient of the reduction line may be set according to the gradient of the limit line PWL . When the gradient of the reduction line is not 45° , for example, the amounts of limitation of the correction control signal CP_a which correspond to the amounts of limitation of the correction control signal CY_a are tabularized and are pre-stored. With such an arrangement, when the amount of limitation corresponding to the amount of limitation of the correction control signal CY_a is obtained from the table and is used, it is possible to easily limit the correction control signal CP_a .

[4-3. Third Limitation Operation on Drive Currents]

Although a case in which the peak-current limit values set by reducing the power-supply times are fixed has been described above in the first limitation operation, the peak-current limit values may also be changed to perform the limitation operation.

Next, a description for a third limitation operation on the drive currents will be given of a case in which the first limit value is varied according to the amount of current of the first drive current used for correcting image blur in the first direction and the second limit value is varied according to the amount of current of the second drive current used for correcting image blur in the second direction.

A case in which the peak-current limit value LY_p is varied to perform the limitation operation will be described as the third limitation operation on the drive currents. For example, it is assumed that the output time (power-supply time) of the drive-current output unit **762** when the rated output peak current has a current value Ip_1 is limited to a value that is smaller than or equal to a first peak-current limit time Tp_1 . It is also assumed that the output time of the drive-current output unit **762** when the rated output peak current has a current value $Ip_2 (<Ip_1)$ is limited to a value that is smaller than or equal to a second peak-current limit time $Tp_2 (>Tp_1)$. It is further assumed that the output time of the drive-current output unit **762** when the rated output peak current has a current value $Ip_3 (<Ip_2)$ is limited to a value that is smaller than or equal to a third peak-current limit time $Tp_3 (>Tp_2)$.

FIG. 14 is a flowchart illustrating the third limitation operation. FIG. 14 illustrates the third limitation operation for the correction control signal CY_a . In the initial setting in step $ST1$ described above and illustrated in FIG. 8, the drive unit **76** in the image-blur correction control unit **70** sets a first peak-current limit value LY_{p1} so that, for example, it does not exceed the maximum rated output peak current value (the current value Ip_1 in the first peak-current limit time Tp_1). The drive unit **76** also sets a first limit time TL_{p1} , which is a limit

time for the limitation operation using the first peak-current limit value LY_{p1} , to the first peak-current limit time Tp_1 . The drive unit **76** also sets a second peak-current limit time LY_{p2} so that it does not exceed the maximum rated output peak current value (the current value Ip_2 in the second peak-current limit time Tp_2). The drive unit **76** also sets a third peak-current limit value LY_{p3} so that it does not exceed the maximum rated output peak current value (the current value Ip_3 in the third peak-current limit time Tp_3).

In addition, the drive unit **76** sets “0” for a first limit elapsed time tmp_1 , a second limit elapsed time tmp_2 , a third limit elapsed time tmp_3 , and the reset elapsed time tmr . The first limit elapsed time tmp_1 is an elapsed time in which the limitation operation is performed using the first peak-current limit time LY_{p1} . The second limit elapsed time tmp_2 is an elapsed time in which the limitation operation is performed using the second peak-current limit time LY_{p2} . The third limit elapsed time tmp_3 is an elapsed time in which the limitation operation is performed using the third peak-current limit value LY_{p3} . The reset elapsed time tmr is an elapsed time in which the limitation operation is reset.

In step $ST21$, the drive unit **76** determines whether or not the correction control signal CY_a supplied from the servo arithmetic unit **75** exceeds the second peak-current limit time LY_{p2} . When the correction control signal CY_a exceeds the second peak-current limit time LY_{p2} , the process of the drive unit **76** proceeds to step $ST22$. When the correction control signal CY_a does not exceed the second peak-current limit time LY_{p2} , the process proceeds to step $ST25$.

In step $ST22$, the drive unit **76** measures the first limit elapsed time tmp_1 . More specifically, the drive unit **76** starts a first limitation operation for limiting the correction control signal CY_a to a value that is smaller than or equal to the first peak-current limit time LY_{p1} and measures the first limit elapsed time tmp_1 . During the first limitation operation, the drive unit **76** continues the measurement of the first limit elapsed time tmp_1 . In addition, during the first limitation operation, the drive unit **76** sets “0” for the reset elapsed time tmr , which is the time in which the limitation operation is reset. The process then proceeds to step $ST23$.

In step $ST23$, the drive unit **76** determines whether or not the first limit elapsed time tmp_1 exceeds the first limit time TL_{p1} . When the first limit elapsed time tmp_1 exceeds the first limit time TL_{p1} , the process of the drive unit **76** proceeds to step $ST24$. When the first limit elapsed time tmp_1 does not exceed the first limit time TL_{p1} , the process proceeds to step $ST7$ illustrated in FIG. 8.

In step $ST24$, the drive unit **76** rests the limitation operation. That is, the drive unit **76** changes the limit value from the first peak-current limit time LY_{p1} to the reset limit value LY_r . The process then proceeds to step $ST7$ illustrated in FIG. 8.

When the process proceeds from step $ST21$ to step $ST25$, the drive unit **76** performs operation setting for a second limitation operation. That is, the drive unit **76** sets a second limit time TL_{p2} in accordance with the first limit elapsed time tmp_1 and/or the amount of drive current in the first limitation operation. The process then proceeds to step $ST26$. In the setting of the second limit time TL_{p2} , for example, when the first limit elapsed time tmp_1 exceeds the first limit time TL_{p1} , the drive unit **76** sets “0” for the second limit time TL_{p2} so that the reset operation is continuously performed. When the first limit elapsed time tmp_1 is “0”, the drive unit **76** sets the second limit time TL_{p2} to the second peak-current limit time Tp_2 . When the first limit elapsed time tmp_1 is larger than “0” and is smaller than the first limit time TL_{p1} , the drive unit **76** sets the second limit time TL_{p2} in accordance with a time difference between the first limit elapsed time tmp_1 and the

first peak-current limit time $Tp1$. The drive unit **76** may also set the second limit time $TLp2$ in accordance with the first limit elapsed time $tmp1$ and/or the amount of drive current in the first limitation operation or in accordance with the amount of drive current in the first limitation operation. The second limit time $TLp2$ in this case is larger than "0" and is smaller than the second peak-current limit time $Tp2$. When the second limit time $TLp2$ is set as described above, for example, it is possible to ensure that no first drive current is continuously output as the current value $Ip2$ after the state in which the first drive current is set to the current value $Ip1$ elapses for the first peak-current limit time $Tp1$. That is, it is possible to perform drive-current output control processing corresponding to the drive-current output unit **762**.

In step **ST26**, the drive unit **76** determines whether or not the correction control signal CYa supplied from the servo arithmetic unit **75** exceeds the third peak-current limit value $LYp3$ and the second limit time $TLp2$ is larger than "0". When the correction control signal CYa exceeds the third peak-current limit value $LYp3$ and the second limit time $TLp2$ is larger than "0", the process of the drive unit **76** proceeds to step **ST27**. Otherwise, the process proceeds to step **ST30**.

In step **ST27**, the drive unit **76** measures the second limit elapsed time $tmp2$. More specifically, the drive unit **76** starts the second limitation operation for limiting the correction control signal CYa to a value that is smaller than or equal to the second peak-current limit time $LYp2$ and measures the second limit elapsed time $tmp2$. The processing in step **ST27** is performed when the correction control signal CYa is smaller than or equal to the second peak-current limit time $LYp2$ and exceeds the third peak-current limit value $LYp3$. Thus, the operation enters the state of the second limitation operation in which the correction control signal CYa is limited to a value that is smaller than or equal to the second peak-current limit time $LYp2$. During the second limitation operation, the drive unit **76** continues the measurement of the second limit elapsed time $tmp2$. In addition, during the second limitation operation, the drive unit **76** sets "0" for the reset elapsed time tmr . The process then proceeds to step **ST28**.

In step **ST28**, the drive unit **76** determines whether or not the second limit elapsed time $tmp2$ exceeds the second limit time $TLp2$. When the second limit elapsed time $tmp2$ exceeds the second limit time $TLp2$, the process of the drive unit **76** proceeds to step **ST29**. When the second limit elapsed time $tmp2$ does not exceed the second limit time $TLp2$, the process proceeds to step **ST7** illustrated in FIG. **8**.

In step **ST29**, the drive unit **76** resets the limitation operation. That is, the drive unit **76** changes the limit value to the reset limit value LYr . The process then proceeds to step **ST7** illustrated in FIG. **8**.

When the process proceeds from step **ST25** to step **ST30**, the drive unit **76** performs operation setting for a third limitation operation. The drive unit **76** sets a third limit time $TLp3$ in accordance with the first limit elapsed time $tmp1$ and the second limit elapsed time $tmp2$ and/or the amounts of drive current in the first limitation operation and the second limitation operation. The process then proceeds to step **ST31**. For setting the third limit time $TLp3$, for example, when the first limit elapsed time $tmp1$ exceeds the first limit time $TLp1$ and the second limit elapsed time $tmp2$ exceeds the second limit time $TLp2$, the drive unit **76** sets "0" for the third limit time $TLp3$. With such an arrangement, the reset operation is continuously performed without performing the third limitation operation. When the first limit elapsed time $tmp1$ and the second limit elapsed time $tmp2$ are "0", the drive unit **76** sets the third limit time $TLp3$ to the third peak-current limit time

$Tp3$. When either the first limit elapsed time $tmp1$ or the second limit elapsed time $tmp2$ is larger than or equal to "0" and the first limit elapsed time $tmp1$ is smaller than the first limit time $TLp1$ and when the second limit elapsed time $tmp2$ is smaller than the second limit time $TLp2$, the drive unit **76** sets the third limit time $TLp3$ in accordance with a difference time between the first limit elapsed time $tmp1$ and the first peak-current limit time $Tp1$ and a difference time between the second limit elapsed time $tmp2$ and the second peak-current limit time $Tp2$. The drive unit **76** may also set the third limit time $TLp3$ in accordance with the first limit elapsed time $tmp1$, the amount of drive current in the first limitation operation, the second limit elapsed time $tmp2$, and the amount of drive current in the second limitation operation or in accordance with the amount of drive current in the first limitation operation and the amount of drive current in the second limitation operation. The third limit time $TLp3$ in this case is "0" or larger and is smaller than the third peak-current limit time $Tp3$.

In step **ST32**, the drive unit **76** measures the third limit elapsed time $tmp3$. More specifically, the drive unit **76** starts the third limitation operation for limiting the correction control signal CYa to a value that is smaller than or equal to the third peak-current limit value $LYp3$ and measures the third limit elapsed time $tmp3$. The process in step **ST32** is performed when the correction control signal CYa is smaller than or equal to the third peak-current limit value $LYp3$ and is larger than the output-current limit value LYm . Thus, the operation enters the state of the third limitation operation in which the correction control signal CYa is limited to a value that is smaller than or equal to the third peak-current limit value $LYp3$. During the third limitation operation, the drive unit **76** continues the measurement of the third limit elapsed time $tmp3$. In addition, during the third limitation operation, the drive unit **76** sets "0" for the reset elapsed time tmr . The process then proceeds to step **ST33**.

In step **ST33**, the drive unit **76** determines whether or not the third limit elapsed time $tmp3$ exceeds the third limit time $TLp3$. When the third limit elapsed time $tmp3$ exceeds the third limit time $TLp3$, the process of the drive unit **76** proceeds to step **ST34**. When the third limit elapsed time $tmp3$ does not exceed the third limit time $TLp3$, the process proceeds to step **ST7** illustrated in FIG. **8**.

In step **ST34**, the drive unit **76** resets the limitation operation. That is, the drive unit **76** changes the limit value to the reset limit value LYr . The process then proceeds to step **ST7** illustrated in FIG. **8**.

When the process proceeds from step **ST31** to step **ST35**, the drive unit **76** resets the limit elapsed times. That is, the drive unit **76** sets "0" for the first limit elapsed time $tmp1$, the second limit elapsed time $tmp2$, and the third limit elapsed time $tmp3$. The process then proceeds to step **ST36**.

In step **ST36**, the drive unit **76** measures the reset elapsed time tmr . More specifically, the drive unit **76** starts a reset operation for limiting the correction control signal CYa to a value that is smaller than or equal to the reset limit value LYr ($=LYm$) and measures the reset elapsed time tmr . During the reset operation, the drive unit **76** continues the measurement of the reset elapsed time tmr , and the process proceeds to step **ST37**.

In step **ST37**, the drive unit **76** determines whether or not the reset elapsed time tmr exceeds the preset reset end time TLr . When the reset elapsed time tmr exceeds the reset end time TLr , the process of the drive unit **76** proceeds to step **ST38**. When the reset elapsed time tmr does not exceed the reset end time TLr , the process proceeds to step **ST7** illustrated in FIG. **8**.

In step ST38, the drive unit 76 performs a reset release operation. That is, the drive unit 76 changes the limit value from the reset limit value LYr to the first peak-current limit time LYp1. The drive unit 76 also sets "0" for the reset elapsed time tmr. The process then proceeds to step ST7 illustrated in FIG. 8.

FIGS. 15A to 15C illustrate the limitation operation on the correction control signal CYa. As illustrated in FIG. 15A, for example, when the correction control signal CYa exceeds the second peak-current limit time LYp2 at time t11, the drive unit 76 limits the correction control signal CYa to a value that is smaller than or equal to the first peak-current limit time LYp1. When the elapsed time in which the correction control signal CYa exceeds the second peak-current limit time LYp2 exceeds the first limit time TLp1 at time t12, the drive unit 76 limits the correction control signal CYa to a value that is smaller than or equal to the reset limit value LYr (=LYm) until time t13 at which the reset end time Tlr is exceeded.

As illustrated in FIG. 15B, for example, when the correction control signal CYa exceeds the third peak-current limit value LYp3 and is smaller than or equal to the second peak-current limit time LYp2 at time t21, the drive unit 76 uses the pre-limitation correction control signal CYa as the limited correction control signal CYb. That is, the operation enters a state in which the correction control signal CYa is limited to a value that is smaller than or equal to the second peak-current limit time LYp2. When the elapsed time in which the correction control signal CYa exceeds the third peak-current limit value LYp3 and is smaller than or equal to the second peak-current limit time LYp2 exceeds the second limit time TLp2 at time t22, the drive unit 76 limits the correction control signal CYa to a value that is smaller than or equal to the reset limit value LYr (=LYm) until time t23 at which the reset end time Tlr is exceeded.

As illustrated in FIG. 15C, for example, when the correction control signal CYa exceeds the second peak-current limit time LYp2 at time t31, the drive unit 76 limits the correction control signal CYa to a value that is smaller than or equal to the first peak-current limit time LYp1. When the correction control signal CYa is larger than the third peak-current limit value LYp3 and is smaller than or equal to the second peak-current limit time LYp2 at time t32 before the first limit time TLp1, the drive unit 76 sets the second limit time TLp2, for example, in accordance with a difference time between the first limit elapsed time tmp1 and the first limit time TLp1. That is, the operation enters a state in which the correction control signal CYa is limited to a value that is smaller than or equal to the second limit time TLp2 from time t32 until the time at which the second peak-current limit time LYp2 elapses. When the correction control signal CYa is larger than the output-current limit value LYm and is smaller than or equal to the third peak-current limit value LYp3 at time t33 before the second limit time TLp2, the drive unit 76 sets the third limit time TLp3, for example, in accordance with a difference time between the first limit elapsed time tmp1 and the first limit time TLp1 and a difference time between the second limit elapsed time tmp2 and the second limit time TLp2. That is, the operation enters a state in which the correction control signal CYa is limited to a value that is smaller than or equal to the third peak-current limit value LYp3 from time t33 until the time at which the third limit time TLp3 elapses. When the elapsed time in which the correction control signal CYa is larger than the output-current limit value LYm and is smaller than or equal to the third peak-current limit value LYp3 exceeds the third limit time TLp3 at time t34, the drive unit 76 limits the correction control signal CYa

to a value that is smaller than or equal to the reset limit value LYr (=LYm) until time t35 at which the reset end time Tlr is exceeded.

The drive unit 76 performs such processing on not only the correction control signal CYa but also the correction control signal CPa, generates the second drive current on the basis of the limited correction control signal CPb, and outputs the second drive current.

As a result of such processing performed on not only the correction control signal CYa but also the correction control signal CPa, when the correction control signal exceeds the output-current limit value LYm (LPm), the correction control signal is limited with a limit value corresponding to the excess. Thus, when the excess is large, the first drive current and the second drive current can be set to have large current values for a short period of time and thus high torque can be generated. When the excess is small, a first drive current and a second drive current that are larger than those drive currents in the related art, although they are smaller than those when the excess is large, can be output for a longer period of time than the period of time when the excess is large. Thus, high torque can be generated compared with the related art. Accordingly, the shake correction performance when a large shake occurs can be improved compared with the related art. In addition, since the limit value and the limit time are changed in accordance with the signal level of the corresponding correction control signal, it is possible to perform shake correction corresponding to the magnitude of shake.

[4-4. Other Limitation Operations on Drive Currents]

Meanwhile, when the first drive current or the second drive current is supplied to a coil in the drive motor or the like, the temperature of the coil may change. The temperature of the coil may also change depending on the operating environment. When such a coil temperature change or the like occurs, there is a possibility that the resistance value of the coil may change. Upon change in the resistance value of the coil, for example, when the correction control signal is set to the limit value, there are cases in which the drive current is not constant. Accordingly, the drive unit 76 performs correction based on the correction control signals having the limit values so that a first drive signal supplied to the first correction mechanism and a second drive signal supplied to the second correction mechanism have constant current values corresponding to the limit values. For example, the drive unit 76 detects a change in the temperature of the coil and a change in the resistance value thereof and corrects each limit value, based on a result of the detection, so as to ensure that the current value of the corresponding drive current does not change even when the resistance value of the coil changes. Such an arrangement makes it possible to avoid a situation in which the resistance value of the coil changes to cause the drive current to exceed, for example, the corresponding limit value.

In the limitation operation on the correction control signal, when the limit value and the limit time are changed according to the signal level of the correction control signal as in the second limitation operation, the limit time may be switched after performing the reset operation. In this case, the reset period is provided before changing the limitation operation. Thus, when the second limitation operation or the third limitation operation is performed, the limit time may be calculated, for example, without considering the elapsed time of the limitation operation that has been performed.

[5. Other Configurations and Operations of Image Capture Apparatus]

Although examples in which a shake in the yaw direction and the pitch direction is corrected have been described in the

above embodiments, the shake correction is not limited to two axes in the yaw direction and the pitch direction. For example, in addition to the yaw direction and the pitch direction, the shake correction in a rotation direction about an optical axis may also be performed. For example, a support mechanism is provided to support the gimbal vibration isolation mechanism **15** (illustrated in FIG. 2) to allow rotation about the optical axis, and a drive mechanism is provided to rotate the gimbal vibration isolation mechanism **15** about the optical axis.

The shake detecting unit **61** also detects a shake in the rotation direction about the optical axis, and the position detecting unit **46** detects, in the gimbal vibration isolation mechanism **15**, a position in the rotation direction about the optical axis. The image-blur correction control unit **70** generates a correction control signal on the basis of the shake and the position in the rotation direction about the optical axis. The image-blur correction control unit **70** generates drive currents on the basis of the correction control signals and outputs the drive currents to the image-blur correcting unit **45**, to thereby perform shake correction not only in the yaw direction and pitch direction but also in the rotation direction about the optical axis.

The image-blur correction control unit **70** also limits the correction control signals in accordance with the power supply of the power-supply unit and the rated output current and the rated peak output current of the semiconductor device that outputs the drive currents, as well as the drive current for performing shake correction in the rotation direction about the optical axis. For example, the drive-current limiting unit **761** in the image-blur correction control unit **70** limits a third drive current for the shake correction in the rotation direction about the optical axis to a fourth limit value and limits a total value of the first drive current, the second drive current, and the third drive current to a third limit value that is smaller than a total value of the first limit value, the second limit value, and the fourth limit value. In addition, the drive-current limiting unit **761** varies the fourth limit value corresponding to the third drive current by changing the power-supply time of the third drive current, for example, by reducing the power supply time of the third drive current, to thereby increase the fourth limit value so that a large third drive current can be output.

With such an arrangement, the shake correction performance can be enhanced not only when the shake correction is performed in the yaw direction and the pitch direction but also when the shake correction is performed in the rotation direction about the optical axis.

The series of processing described hereinabove can be executed by hardware, software, or a combination of thereof. When the processing is executed by software, a program in which a processing sequence has been recorded is loaded into a memory in a computer incorporated in dedicated hardware and is executed. Alternatively, the program can be executed by a general-purpose computer that can execute various types of processing, through installation of the program.

For example, the program can be pre-recorded to a recording medium, such as a hard disk or a read only memory (ROM). Alternatively, the program can be temporarily or permanently stored on (recorded to) a removable recording medium, such as a flexible disk, a compact disc read only memory (CD-ROM), a magneto optical (MO) disk, a digital versatile disc (DVD), a magnetic disk, or a semiconductor memory card. Such a removable recording medium can be provided in the form of the so-called packaged software.

In addition to installation from a removable recording medium to a computer, the program may also be transferred from a download side to a computer through a network, such as a local area network (LAN) or the Internet, in a wireless or

wired manner. The computer can receive the program transferred in such a manner and can load the program to a recording medium, such as a built-in hard disk.

The present technology is not to be construed as being limited to the above-described technical embodiments. The technical embodiments of the present technology are disclosed by way of example, and it is apparent to those skilled in the art that various modifications and substitutions are possible to the embodiments without departing from the spirit and scope of the present technology. That is to say, the scope of the appended claims is to be considered in order to determine the spirit and scope of the present technology.

The image-blur correction device according to the embodiment of the present technology can also have the following configuration.

(1) An image-blur correction device including a drive-current output unit configured to output a first drive current for driving a first correction mechanism for correcting image blur in a first direction orthogonal to an optical axis and a second drive current for driving a second correction mechanism for correcting image blur in a second direction orthogonal to the optical axis and the first direction; and a drive-current limiting unit configured to limit the first drive current to a first limit value, limit the second drive current to a second limit value, limit a total value of the first drive current and the second drive current to a third limit value that is smaller than a total value of the first limit value and the second limit value, vary the first limit value by changing a power-supply time of the first drive current, and vary the second limit value by changing a power-supply time of the second drive current.

(2) The image-blur correction device according to (1), wherein the drive-current limiting unit reduces a power-supply time in which the first drive current is limited to the first limit value to thereby increase the first limit value and reduces a power-supply time in which the second drive current is limited to the second limit value to thereby increase the second limit value.

(3) The image-blur correction device according to (1) or (2), wherein the drive-current limiting unit varies the first limit value in accordance with an amount of current of the first drive current used for correcting the image blur in the first direction and varies the second limit value in accordance with an amount of current of the second drive current used for correcting the image blur in the second direction.

(4) The image-blur correction device according to one of (1) to (3), wherein the drive-current limiting unit sets limit values for ensuring minimum drive currents for the first limit value and the second limit value.

(5) The image-blur correction device according to one of (1) to (4), wherein during limitation of the first drive current and the second drive current, the drive-current limiting unit performs the limitation of one of the first and second drive currents and the limitation of the other drive current in association with each other.

(6) The image-blur correction device according to one of (1) to (5), wherein the drive-current limiting unit sets an amount of limitation of the one drive current to an amount of limitation corresponding to an amount of limitation of the other drive current.

(7) The image-blur correction device according to one of (1) to (6), wherein the drive-current limiting unit limits correction control signals generated so as to correct the image blur, in accordance with a detection result of the image blur, and corrects the correction control signals so that the first drive signal supplied from the drive-current output unit to the first correction mechanism and the second drive signal supplied from the drive-current output unit to the second correc-

tion mechanism, the first drive signal and the second drive signal being supplied based on the correction control signals having limit values, have constant current values corresponding to the limit values.

(8) The image-blur correction device according to one of (1) to (7), wherein the drive-current limiting unit sets the third limit value in accordance with a power supply capability of a power-supply unit that supplies power used for generating the first drive current and the second drive current.

(9) The image-blur correction device according to one of (1) to (8), wherein the drive-current output unit outputs a third drive current for driving a third correction mechanism for correcting image blur in a rotation direction about the optical axis; and the drive-current limiting unit limits the third drive current to a fourth limit value, limits a total value of the first drive current, the second drive current, and the third drive current to a third limit value that is smaller than a total value of the first limit value, the second limit value, and the fourth limit value, and varies the fourth limit value by changing a power-supply time of the third drive current.

It should be understood by those skilled in the art that various modifications, combinations, sub-combinations and alterations may occur depending on design requirements and other factors insofar as they are within the scope of the appended claims or the equivalents thereof.

What is claimed is:

1. An image-blur correction device comprising:
one or more processors operable to:
 - output a first drive current for driving a first correction mechanism for correcting image blur in a first direction orthogonal to an optical axis;
 - output a second drive current for driving a second correction mechanism for correcting image blur in a second direction orthogonal to the optical axis and the first direction;
 - limit the first drive current to a first limit value, wherein the first limit value is based on a minimum value of the first drive current to obtain image blur correction in the first direction in an event image blur correction in the second direction is performed;
 - limit the second drive current to a second limit value;
 - limit a total value of the first drive current and the second drive current to a third limit value that is smaller than a total value of the first limit value and the second limit value;
 - vary the first limit value by changing a power-supply time of the first drive current; and
 - vary the second limit value by changing a power-supply time of the second drive current.
2. The image-blur correction device according to claim 1, wherein the one or more processors are operable to reduce the power-supply time in which the first drive current is limited to the first limit value to thereby increase the first limit value and reduce the power-supply time in which the second drive current is limited to the second limit value to thereby increase the second limit value.
3. The image-blur correction device according to claim 1, wherein the one or more processors are operable to vary the first limit value in accordance with an amount of current of the first drive current used for correcting the image blur in the first direction and vary the second limit value in accordance with an amount of current of the second drive current used for correcting the image blur in the second direction.
4. The image-blur correction device according to claim 1, wherein the one or more processors are operable to set limit values for ensuring minimum drive currents for the first limit value and the second limit value.

5. The image-blur correction device according to claim 1, wherein, during limitation of the first drive current and the second drive current, the one or more processors are operable to perform the limitation of one of the first and second drive currents and the limitation of the other drive current in association with each other.

6. The image-blur correction device according to claim 1, wherein the one or more processors are operable to set an amount of limitation of one of the first and second drive currents to an amount of limitation corresponding to an amount of limitation of the other of the first and second drive currents.

7. The image-blur correction device according to claim 1, wherein the one or more processors are operable to limit correction control signals generated to correct the image blur in accordance with a detection result of the image blur, and correct the correction control signals so that the first drive current supplied to the first correction mechanism and the second drive current supplied to the second correction mechanism, the first drive current and the second drive current supplied based on the correction control signals having limit values, have constant current values corresponding to the limit values.

8. The image-blur correction device according to claim 1, wherein the one or more processors are operable to set the third limit value in accordance with a power supply capability of a power-supply unit that supplies power used for generating the first drive current and the second drive current.

9. The image-blur correction device according to claim 1, wherein the one or more processors are operable to:

- a third drive current for driving a third correction mechanism for correcting image blur in a rotation direction about the optical axis; and
- limit the third drive current to a fourth limit value, limit a total value of the first drive current, the second drive current, and the third drive current to a fifth limit value that is smaller than a total value of the first limit value, the second limit value, and the fourth limit value, and vary the fourth limit value by changing a power-supply time of the third drive current.

10. The image-blur correction device according to claim 1, wherein the second limit value is based on a minimum value of the second drive current to obtain image blur correction in the second direction in an event image blur correction in the first direction is performed.

11. The image-blur correction device according to claim 1, wherein the first limit value and the second limit value are based on a maximum rated output current.

12. The image-blur correction device according to claim 1, wherein the first limit value and the second limit value are based on a maximum rated output peak current.

13. An image-blur correction method comprising:
in an image-blur correction device:

- outputting a first drive current for driving a first correction mechanism for correcting image blur in a first direction orthogonal to an optical axis;
- outputting a second drive current for driving a second correction mechanism for correcting image blur in a second direction orthogonal to the optical axis and the first direction;
- limiting the first drive current to a first limit value, wherein the first limit value is based on a minimum value of the first drive current to obtain image blur correction in the first direction in an event image blur correction in the second direction is performed;
- limiting the second drive current to a second limit value;

29

limiting a total value of the first drive current and the second drive current to a third limit value that is smaller than a total value of the first limit value and the second limit value;

varying the first limit value by changing a power-supply 5
time of the first drive current; and

varying the second limit value by changing a power-supply time of the second drive current.

14. An image capture apparatus comprising: 10
one or more processors operable to:
generate an image signal of a captured image;
detect shake of the image capture apparatus;
output a first drive current for driving a first correction 15
mechanism for correcting, in the captured image, image blur in a first direction orthogonal to an optical axis;
output a second drive current for driving a second correction mechanism for correcting, in the captured image,

30

image blur in a second direction orthogonal to the optical axis and the first direction; and

limit the first drive current to a first limit value, wherein the first limit value is based on a minimum value of the first drive current to obtain image blur correction in the first direction in an event image blur correction in the second direction is performed;

limit the second drive current to a second limit value;

limit a total value of the first drive current and the second drive current to a third limit value that is smaller than a total value of the first limit value and the second limit value, in accordance with detected shake;

vary the first limit value by changing a power-supply time of the first drive current; and

vary the second limit value by changing a power-supply time of the second drive current.

* * * * *